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THE ONE SOUP YOU NEED FOR WINTER
page 43

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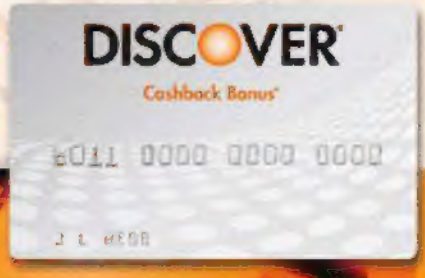

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COOKING, CARING & SHARING® | NOVEMBER 2011

We've Taken It Over the Top! Our extensive baking guide offers the ultimate in holiday confections, *page 47.*

ON OUR COVER Gather around a bountiful table for a turkey-and-all-the-trimmings feast, *page 22.* Save room for pumpkin pie.

Photographer: **Dan Roberts**
Set Stylist: **Stephanie Marchese**
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Let's Holiday!

Here they come—celebrations galore to fill your home, heart and belly. Usher them in with the **best in holiday baking and festive feasting.** You'll fill the season with resounding *yums* and multiple requests of *more, please*!

SPECIAL THIS ISSUE

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COOK SMART

35 Tools & Techniques You're never on your own in the kitchen for Thanksgiving. Our test kitchen tips and a slew of other helpers are just a page-turn, phone call or mouse-click away.

36 Quick Fix Need some speedy side dishes for Thanksgiving? Here are six marvels that come together faster than you can say *gobble, gobble.*

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CLOSE TO HOME

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80 Cooks Who Care Inspired by her family of servicemen and women, this baker makes sending care packages overseas her personal duty.

83 Roadfood Stuffing, dressing or filling—no matter its name, Thanskgiving dinner wouldn't be the same without it. Food writers Jane and Michael Stern explore local variations of Thanksgiving's second most popular dish.

88 Field Editors She may live in Florida, but this Field Editor honors her English and Australian roots with food. Other Field Editors—one from Oregon and one from Pennsylvania—share ideas for holiday accents.

Super Sides Special enough to partner with the turkey, yet easy enough to serve on a busy weeknight, *page 36.*

Look for our Field Editors!
These 1,000 volunteer editors, from every state and Canadian province, share recipes and tips with our staff, other readers and online community, as well as spread the *Taste of Home* love in their areas. See their names beginning on *page 90.* Maybe one of these fantastic cooks lives near you!

FE **This icon** next to a name means that person is a *Taste of Home* Field Editor!

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WANT TO SHARE A RECIPE? VISIT TASTEOFHOME.COM/SUBMIT.

ILLUSTRATION: ALLI ARNOLD

VISIT US ONLINE! Go to **tasteofhome.com/plus** to find dozens more cookies, cakes, pies, and everything else you need for a magnificent Thanksgiving table.

Here's to a Hot Topic

Toy ovens are cute, but the real thrill happens behind the door of your **kitchen's most magical appliance.**

I grew up in the launch generation of the Easy-Bake Oven, that instant classic, at once scary and spectacular, from Kenner (and later Hasbro, for you toy buffs). A contraption that "baked" with incandescent lightbulbs, the Easy-Bake quickly became the gift wish of millions of kids. It was on my Christmas list every year for some time. And each year, while friends got theirs, the Easy-Bake failed to show up under our tree. When it became clear that it wasn't Santa Claus denying me but my own mother, I asked her why. I was surprised not to hear the standard "Just because other kids have it doesn't mean you need it." Instead, she said, "If you want to bake, you don't need a toy. Learn to use the real oven."

What an invitation! It was one of the cooler opportunities of my 11-year-old life: to bake something myself! Maybe not a trip to Disneyland, but very respectable nonetheless. My maiden baking voyage involved Nestle Toll House chocolate chip cookies. After a motherly tutorial, I set to work, with my sister Jan as my "helper." We ate a fair amount of dough before it ever hit the cookie sheet. And I didn't know how to set the oven timer, so I watched the second hand on the kitchen clock sweep around a dozen times—sort of like taking the really long way home. It worked all the same, and I had baked my first honest-to-goodness batch of cookies!

There were many batches to follow, along with a growing awareness of how magical baking was. I gravitated to the kitchen when my mom or grandmother was baking, taking in the mysteries of sifting, kneading, beating, folding and fluting, my help becoming more meaningful each time. As a teenager and 20-something, I lost interest in anything kitchen-related, but later, as a mother of my own daughters, I got caught up in it again.

Baking allows you to transform seemingly random and unrelated ingredients into a truly special something. And from simple breads to sumptuous layer cakes, baked goods elicit emotion the way no other foods do. Perhaps that's why they're so incredibly popular during the holidays. Like the holidays themselves, they're, well, magical.

In that spirit, I invite you to savor the seasonal baking magic in our blowout 19-page guide, **"Home-Baked for the Holidays."**

Whether you're an ace, a novice or any kind of baker in between, you'll find fabulous recipes and incredibly useful tips from readers like you, and our experts in the *TOH* Test Kitchen, on baking up tantalizing **cheesecake, cookies, cake, pie, bread and more**. Plus there's the perfect packing cookie for **sending to troops overseas**, along with advice on how to keep it from turning to crumbs. The baking guide, full of treats like those in the photos *below left*, starts on *page 47*.

As for the Easy-Bake Oven? The new Easy-Bake Ultimate Oven recently hit store shelves, a streamlined version of the clunky model I pined for way back when. One year, my own two girls begged for it, and I of course acquiesced, not wanting them to feel cheated, as I had. Truth? The magic wore off after a month or two, and it spent most of its days in a closet until we bequeathed it to a neighbor. But, happily for me, both of them now enjoy using the "real oven." ■

Catherine

CATHERINE CASSIDY Editor-in-Chief

P.S. I almost forgot: This issue is fairly bursting with incredible Thanksgiving recipes and ideas. In fact, I think it's our **best Thanksgiving issue ever**. A complete soup-to-dessert feast, contest-winning ideas for T-day leftovers, stuffings from around the country—even the perfect "turkey" treat for kids. Don't miss any of it!

Tart Sweet Lemon-Thyme Bread bakes in a pan pretty enough to make it a gift.

Easy Sweet These shortbread treats are made with three basic ingredients.

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Serious Turkey Talk

To bring you the best Thanksgiving ever, our editors, test kitchen experts and photo studio staffers roasted **23 turkeys,** baked **22 cups each of stuffing and sweet potatoes,** stirred up **10 cups of gravy** and used **12 cups of whole cranberries.** We're so stuffed we can't move! It's a tough job, but somebody's gotta do it.

Audit Bureau of Circulations

Made from Magazines Sales of these trivets help provide marketing support to Vietnamese artists. Recycled Colorwrap Trivet, serrv.org. *$24*

Gifts With Gratitude

Special ideas and gifts **capture the heart of the holiday** to share with those near and far. | BY ELIZABETH RUSSELL | ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALLI ARNOLD

Merci, Grazie, Danke Turn drink identifiers into thank-yous. Write "thank you" in different languages on tags or paper. Attach, along with a name tag and clipped memento from the corresponding country, to each guest's glass.

Inspired Cooking With bright color on one side and an old-school print on the other, this hand-sewn apron fits any chef. Batik Vibrance Apron, therainforestsite.com. *$17*

Proceeds help artisans in Ghana create business plans.

Thoughtful Shopping Each bag provides 10 meals via the United Nations World Food Program. Feed 10 Bag with Pouch, feedprojects.com. *$25*

Music With Heart Treat a bud to a concert with tickets that give back to charities, ticketsforcharity.com.

Serve Others Leave this behind for the host, and you'll be invited back. Made from sustainable acacia wood in the Philippines, a percentage of the profit assists area craftsmen. Acacia Tray, serrv.org. *$22*

Leftover Love Share the after-dinner bounty with guests or neighbors. Tuck to-go containers into a paper lunch bag and dress it up with pinking shears, ribbon or yarn, distinctive cutlery and a plate.

FEED PROJECTS (FEED BAGS); TICKETS FOR CHARITY (TICKETS FOR CHARITY LOGO)

Stuff We Love

Ensure that dinner goes off without a hitch with **products designed to ease** Turkey Day dinner prep.

Roast with Style A reliable nonstick roaster is a must for Thanksgiving Day. This one comes equipped with a roasting rack and looks as good as it cooks. Calphalon Contemporary Stainless 16-Inch Roasting Pan Set, **cutleryandmore.com**. *$130*

Easy Lifting You've cooked up a gorgeous, perfect bird. Now, how to lift all 15 pounds of steaming goodness from the pan to the platter? Try these gadgets, which work for large roasts, too. RSVP International's Poultry Lifters, **cooking.com**. *$16*

Mega Mash From its wide, comfortable handle to its ability to mash veggies into the perfect consistency, we're hooked! OXO Good Grips Potato Masher, **chefscatalog.com**. *$12*

Baste with the Best This baster won us over with a specially designed valve that prevents juices from dribbling out. Plus, the tip's removable and the baster comes with a cleaning brush. Tovolo Clear Dripless Baster, **surlatable.com**. *$10*

Gravy Train Making gravy just got easier, thanks to OXO's fat separator. The heat-resistant strainer catches unwanted bits to ensure silky-smooth gravy, and the stopper prevents fat from pouring out. Good Grips 4 Cup Fat Separator, **zappos.com**. *$15*

Gimme 5 Pumpkin Aplenty

The **season would be unthinkable without it**, but cupboards often end up overflowing with **canned pumpkin** or **pumpkin pie filling**. Our staff shares unexpected ways to put them to good use.

I make pumpkin pie wontons with leftover pumpkin, maple syrup, brown sugar and cream cheese. I also make pumpkin hummus, ravioli, soup and smoothies. **—DIANE WERNER**, FOOD DIRECTOR

We make pumpkin bars, bread, chili, pancakes and dip, but we also enjoy it stirred into hot oatmeal with milk and pumpkin pie spice. *Mmm!* **—LORI LAU GRZYBOWSKI**, EDITOR, *COUNTRY WOMAN* MAGAZINE

I make muffins by adding a can of pumpkin pie filling to a box of spice cake mix. **—KATHARINE DIEKFUSS** CIRCULATION DIRECTOR

My whole family, even the grandkids, loves pumpkin pie filling baked in individual custard cups in a water bath, with or without whipped cream on top. **—DIANE ARMSTRONG**, FOOD STYLIST

I always keep canned pumpkin on hand, as I've found it's a wonder drug for my dogs when they have upset stomachs! **—HOWARD GREENBERG**, CREATIVE DIRECTOR

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Cooking *Misadventures*

This **home cook** turned a near-disaster into a **winning dish**.

I wanted to serve a special dessert, a three-layer raspberry chocolate cake, for my first Thanksgiving with my boyfriend's parents. I started baking early that morning, only to realize I didn't have round cake pans. My boyfriend's mom lent me the one pan she had. It took an eternity to bake each layer individually, and each came out a different thickness, but I forged on—and proceeded to destroy my hand-held mixer, which started smoking when I made the filling.

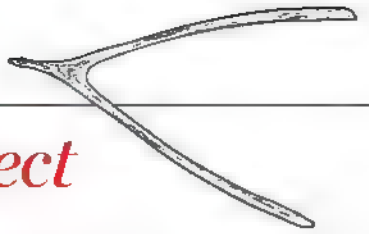
Once I had all the layers assembled, with copious amounts of filling between them, I started icing the cake, only to see the filling ooze out and the layers slide all over. I then managed to have a slight nervous breakdown, actually yelling at the cake and crying because the top layer had split in half and fallen off.

My boyfriend calmed me down and told me the cake tasted incredible. I showed up to dinner with a lopsided two-layer cake with chocolate icing. Filling oozed everywhere. Nonetheless, my boyfriend's parents applauded my baking efforts and assured me the cake was delicious. **—MARY MURPHY** EVANSVILLE, INDIANA

Survey Says

Nothing puts pressure on a cook like Thanksgiving dinner. We asked our Facebook fans for their **biggest Turkey Day triumphs.** Surprisingly, they didn't all involve food!

- Making 22 cakes in two days!
- Making from-scratch gravy for the first time
- Surviving a whole day with my in-laws
- Finishing the entire meal 10 minutes before my oven went out
- Getting out of cooking it
- Not overeating



Hidden Object

Find the **wishbone**

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In our October issue, the pitchfork was on page 67 in the vegetable rainbow.

Our senior editor, Elizabeth Russell, can attest to the awesomeness of these books. "My 2-year-old daughter can't get enough of them, and I love the story they tell."

One for the Books

Of **dreams** and **thank yous**

The world went crazy for Dallas Clayton's *The Awesome Book* and its message to dream big. Now his Awesome World Foundation gives away a book every time one is purchased, spreading the message twice as far. His follow-up book is just as, well, awesome, even though it will cause a little cringing among grammarians. *An Awesome Book of Thanks*, **veryawesomeworld.com**. *$18* ■

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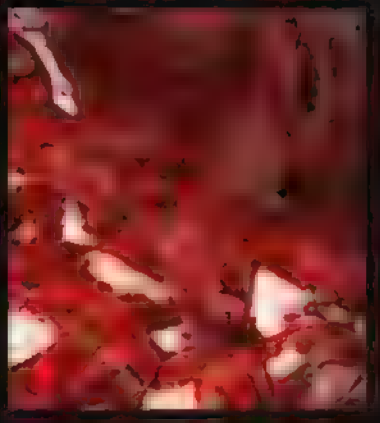

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BRIGHT IDEAS for welcoming friends & family into your home

Smart Kitchen

Thoughtful design choices help a cook move more easily around her kitchen and provide how-tos for creating user-friendly spaces.

WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY STEPHEN EXEL | PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG SCHEIDEMANN

Creating Cookies
Homeowner Ginny McFarland, *above left*, has a comfortable spot in which to decorate Thanksgiving cookies with neighborhood kids Nolan and Quinn Lynch.

Large family gatherings are the norm for Ginny McFarland of Des Moines, Iowa. The avid cook and baker welcomes 19 count 'em, 19 grandchildren, from toddlers to young adults, at holiday time. And she often includes neighborhood kids in the fun. But multiple surgeries due to arthritis decreased Ginny's mobility and threatened to curtail her entertaining. Plus, her kitchen's awkward L-shape floor plan limited her ability to move comfortably from storage to sink to stove.

Ginny, a recent widow with a straightforward "make it right" attitude, decided to design around the challenges. "It was time to redo the kitchen anyway," she says. "I need easy access to pots, pans, ingredients—everything."

Removing a wall separating the kitchen from the pantry and back stair hall turned the L into an open rectangle and gave her direct access to both areas. Big, durable porcelain floor tiles in an oatmeal color enlarge the space visually.

> The most important investment I made was in superior cabinet construction. It makes all the difference in functionality for me.
>
> —GINNY MCFARLAND DES MOINES, IOWA

EVERYTHING WITHIN REACH

More floor and counter space allowed Ginny to create a dedicated prep area for baking. Now she has a place for the bright-red KitchenAid stand mixer she loves to show off, canisters for flour and sugar, and an assortment of rolling pins, spoons and spatulas. There's even a collection of mini utensils on hand so that smaller hands can help with some of the holiday baking.

Still, the kitchen floor space is compact, about 55 square feet. A built-in island would have eaten up floor space—but necessity is the mother of invention, as they say. A leggy vintage table painted eye-popping red, fitted with wheels and topped with butcher block, gives Ginny a way to move groceries from the back door to the refrigerator with ease. More important, the table's lower height allows her to sit down to roll out dough and prep everything from salad to stuffing. "I can even move it out to the dining room to help serve," she says.

The refurbished pantry was fitted with rollout shelving to reduce the need to bend over to reach to the back. Doors that close softly help keep things quiet when the kitchen fills up with a playful group of hungry kids searching for snacks. Upper cabinets hold baskets filled with lightweight items such as plastic wrap and food storage supplies. The handle on Ginny's cane helps pull the baskets forward.

Ginny extended the pantry and upper kitchen cabinets to the ceiling to maximize storage for nonessential items. Custom crown molding provides a finished look. The lower cabinets were fitted with full-extension drawers to hold everything from spices to pots and pans, so nothing is hidden in the back.

When it came time to buy the appliances, Ginny let practicality and instinct be her guide. "I didn't feel that I needed a complete matching suite," she says. "I chose what worked best for me."

Those choices include an LG French door refrigerator with two lower freezer drawers that can be easily organized and accessed. "Having two drawers prevents mysterious frozen things from gathering at the bottom," Ginny jokes. A freestanding Whirlpool glass-top range and oven combo has the control panel at the back where younger kids can't reach knobs and buttons. A KitchenAid dishwasher completes the set. All three sport stainless steel finishes.

The handsome cherry cabinetry was extended to surround the refrigerator, giving it a built-in look. A cinnamon-color stain was applied to cabinets to complement the dark woodwork in the adjacent dining room. Glazing the wood picked up the highlights of the molding and deepened their color. The countertops are granite.

BRIGHT SPOTS

"I thought I wanted light cabinetry and counters," Ginny says. "But every time I looked at the warmer colors, my heart would sing." Cheery yellow walls and vivid accents of red and orange brighten the room.

The kitchen windows also got the deluxe treatment, with Gothic motif panes to match the exterior of the house. Rain glass was installed in two for privacy, because the house next door is close, while the third has clear glass and a view of trees.

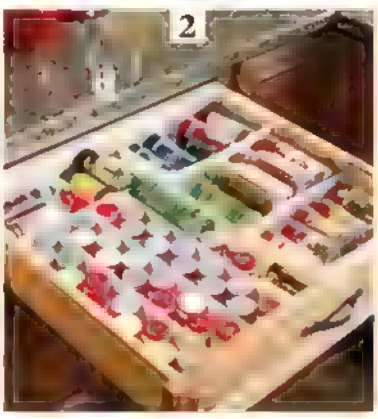
Ginny was even pragmatic about her utensils. There's a set for baking; a second set lives by the stove, minimizing the need to cross the room. In this kitchen, good design and common sense mean ultimate practicality—and the ability to gather 19 kids for a holiday dinner. ■

HAVE A GREAT KITCHEN? We'd love to see it! Send photos (including "before" shots if it's a remodel) plus a family photo to **editors@tasteofhome.com**. If we feature your kitchen, you'll receive **$250**.

Bright Beauties
Custom windows from Weather Shield combine style and privacy. weathershield.com.

Custom Perch A sturdy, lightweight stool moves easily around the room. From Target.

Seamless Style
Ginny matched the finish, but not the brands, of her appliances, including LG Large 4-Door French Door Refrigerator, lg.com; Whirlpool Gold 30-inch range, whirlpool.com; KitchenAid Energy Star Qualified dishwasher, kitchenaid.com



UNIVERSAL DESIGN 101

In her kitchen, Ginny used universal design ideas—elements and products that are multifunctional for people with or without disabilities. For details, visit universaldesign.com.

1 **Parking Space** Assign one spot to keep necessities within reach. A favorite: Microplane Artisan Series graters, useful for grating chocolate, fresh nutmeg or cheese or for zesting citrus peel. Find the graters at **microplane.com** or kitchen stores.

2 **Spice Girl** Ginny uses interlocking drawer dividers, from home improvement stores, to keep her spices tidy.

3 **Off the Shelf** Rollout shelving in the pantry cupboards eliminates bending and reaching. With the handy red tab, nearby ingredients can be moved from storage to countertops without a lot of physical effort.

4 **Pot Luck** Inside the easily accessible rollout shelves is Anolon Nouvelle Copper polished stainless steel cookware (**anolon.com**), a smart choice for Ginny—it's dishwasher safe, meaning no standing at the sink to scrub. The yellow-topped 1.75-quart Revol cocotte is perfect for small casseroles. Find Revol Revolution Cookware at **chefsarsenal.com**

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Mix it up

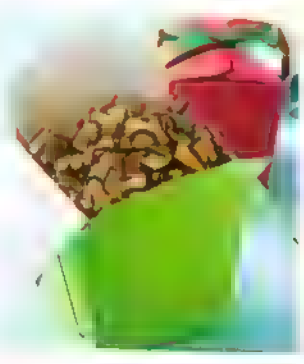
Chex® Party Mix-Change

Ready to shake [illegible]

friends to create loads of [illegible]

1 Spread the word

Get the word out — it's time for your brilliant new holiday party! Set the date, then make your planning and prep a snap at ChexPartyMixChange.com, where you'll find 70+ delicious, 15-minute **Chex® Party Mix** microwave recipes, plus invites, shopping lists, planning tips and tons more.



2 Mix it up with friends

Each guest makes a different Chex® Party Mix recipe to swap, so everyone goes home with plenty of homemade goodies to share with family and friends. Start with five of our favorite 15-minute recipes on these recipe cards.

3 [illegible]

Let your guests dig in and package up their treats in creative containers, bags and decorations — check out ChexPartyMixChange.com, for fun ideas. And celebrate your new Chex® Party Mix-Change holiday tradition!

[illegible]

ChexPartyMixChange.com

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Try these amazingly delicious 15-minute favorites

Get everything you need at

Best friends peanut butter and chocolate go crunchy with **Chex®** cereal

Cinnamon, brown sugar, honey and marshmallows get together in this crazy-delicious, gluten-free mix

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Chex® PB & Chocolate Blast

- 6 c **Rice Chex®** cereal
- 1 c white vanilla baking chips (8 oz)
- 1 c peanut butter chips
- 1 c red and green candy-coated chocolate candies
- 1 c dry-roasted peanuts

1. Line 2 cookie sheets with foil or waxed paper. Place 3 cups cereal in large bowl. In small microwavable bowl, microwave white vanilla baking chips uncovered on High about 1 minute or until chips can be stirred smooth. Pour melted chips over cereal in bowl; stir to evenly coat. Spread mixture in single layer on one of the cookie sheets. Refrigerate 5 minutes or until set.
2. Repeat the above using the remaining cereal and the peanut butter chips; refrigerate 5 minutes or until set.
3. Gently break up coated cereal into large bowl. Add candy and peanuts; stir gently to combine. Store in airtight container.

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Original Chex® Party Mix

- 3 c **Corn Chex®** cereal
- 3 c **Rice Chex®** cereal
- 3 c **Wheat Chex®** cereal
- 1 c mixed nuts
- 1 c bite-size pretzels
- 1 c garlic-flavor bite-size bagel chips or regular-size bagel chips, broken into 1-inch pieces
- 6 tbsp. butter or margarine
- 2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1½ tsp. seasoned salt
- ¾ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. onion powder

1. In large microwavable bowl, mix cereals, nuts, pretzels and bagel chips; set aside. In small microwavable bowl, microwave butter uncovered on High about 40 seconds or until melted. Stir in seasonings. Pour over cereal mixture; stir until evenly coated.
2. Microwave uncovered on High 5 to 6 minutes, thoroughly stirring every 2 minutes. Spread on paper towels to cool. Store in airtight container.

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Get more delicious 15-minute recipes and ideas at

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Chex Mix-Change

Chex® Caramel-Chocolate Drizzles

- 3 c **Corn Chex®** cereal
- 3 c **Rice Chex®** cereal
- ½ bag (14-oz size) caramels (about 25)
- 2 tbsp butter or margarine
- 2 tbsp. milk
- ¼ c semisweet chocolate chips

1. In large microwavable bowl, mix cereals.
2. In medium microwavable bowl, microwave caramels, butter and milk uncovered on High 2 to 3 minutes, stirring after each minute, until caramels are melted and mixture is smooth. Pour over cereals; gently stir until evenly coated.
3. Microwave on High 3 to 4 minutes, stirring after each minute, until just beginning to brown. Spread on waxed paper to cool.
4. In small microwavable bowl, microwave chocolate chips uncovered on High about 1 minute or until chocolate can be stirred smooth. Drizzle over snack. Refrigerate until set. Store in airtight container.

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Hot Buttered Yum Chex® Mix

- 4 c **Honey Nut Chex®** cereal
- 2 c **Cinnamon Chex®** cereal
- ¼ c butter or margarine
- ¼ c packed brown sugar
- 2 tbsp. honey
- ¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- 1 tsp. rum flavoring
- 2 c miniature marshmallows

1. In large microwavable bowl, place cereals. In 2-cup microwavable measuring cup, microwave butter, brown sugar and honey uncovered on High 2 minutes, stirring after 1 minute, until mixture is bubbly. Stir in spices and rum flavoring. Pour over cereal mixture, stirring until coated.
2. Microwave uncovered on High 3 minutes, stirring and scraping bowl after every minute.
3. Cool slightly; about 5 minutes. Stir in marshmallows. Spread on waxed paper. Store in airtight container.

Cooking Gluten Free? Always read labels to make sure each recipe ingredient is gluten free. Products and ingredient sources can change.

Get the party started at
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Chex® Pumpkin Pie Crunch

- ¼ c brown sugar
- 1 tbsp. pumpkin pie spice
- ¼ c butter
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 2 c **Cinnamon Chex®** cereal
- 2 c **Wheat Chex®** cereal
- 2 c **Honey Nut Chex®** cereal
- 8 oz pecans

1. In small bowl, mix brown sugar and pumpkin pie spice; set aside. In small microwave-safe dish, microwave butter on High about 30 seconds or until melted. Stir in vanilla. In large microwavable bowl, mix all cereals and pecans. Pour butter mixture over cereal mixture, stirring until evenly distributed. Add sugar and spice mixture and stir until coated.
2. Microwave uncovered on High 5 minutes or until mixture begins to brown, stirring every minute. Spread on wax paper or a cookie sheet to cool. Store in airtight container.

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Thanksgiving Menu

- Roasted Parsnip & Pear Soup
- Wilted Spinach Salad with Butternut Squash
- Cranberry Ricotta Gnocchi with Brown Butter Sauce
- Jalapeno Cranberry Sauce
- Tangerine-Glazed Turkey
- Spiced Pumpkin Custard Pie

A Celebrated Gathering

One reader shares her **Thanksgiving story** while others share recipes, creating a sumptuous feast that **speaks to the heart**.

BY DEBORAH WAGMAN

Pretty platter Simple garnishes can turn your turkey into a golden brown beauty. Surround it with fresh herbs including rosemary sprigs, slices of orange and kumquats, and even nasturtium leaves.

Since staging her first Thanksgiving feast on a chilly November day in 1950, Mary Jane Sweet—a renowned cook in Lincoln, Nebraska—has returned for more than 50 encore performances.

That means she has stuffed, trussed and lovingly basted and baked at least 1,000 pounds of holiday turkey.

But for Mary Jane, it's not about the bird. And it's not about her silky-smooth mashed potatoes, her gorgeous gravy or even the spiced pumpkin pie that she dresses up every year with leaf and turkey cutouts.

It's about family. Year after year, Mary Jane says, she returned to cooking's most gargantuan task—and the year's biggest batch of dirty dishes—because "cooking is what I do best, and my cooking makes people happy."

From her first solo feast to the spread she prepared before her understudy—daughter Sara—took over a few years ago, her menu never changed. "Everyone looked forward to things like my apricot mold and pumpkin pies all year long," she explains. "I couldn't disappoint them."

Because she loves baking, Mary Jane took back the pie-making duties last year and baked eight pumpkin pies. It wouldn't have been Thanksgiving without them.

Perfectly balanced. The delicate sweetness of pears enhances the earthy note of parsnips in this creamy soup.

Roasted Parsnip & Pear Soup

Once peeled, parsnips may turn dark when exposed to air, so be sure to roast them right after they're chopped. If you want to get a head start on prep, store peeled and chopped parsnips in acidulated water (just add a bit of lemon or lime juice or vinegar to water). —**SARA PETRIE** GRASSIE, ONTARIO

PREP: 1 HOUR 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 45 MIN.
YIELD: 9 SERVINGS (2¼ QT.)

- 1½ lbs. parsnips, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- ¾ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ⅛ tsp. pepper
- 3 medium pears, peeled and chopped
- 3 medium leeks (white portion only), thinly sliced
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 3 shallots, chopped
- ¼ cup butter, cubed
- 6 cups chicken broth
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp. minced fresh thyme
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream

GARNISH

- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 2 tsp. brown sugar
- ⅛ tsp. ground cumin
- ⅛ tsp. ground coriander
- 2 medium pears, thinly sliced

1. In a large bowl, toss the parsnips with oil, nutmeg, salt and pepper. Transfer to a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake, uncovered, at 425° for 25 minutes. Stir in pears; bake 20-25 minutes longer or until parsnips are tender, stirring occasionally.

2. In a large saucepan, cook the leeks, celery and shallots in butter over medium heat for 4-6 minutes or until tender. Stir in the broth, maple syrup, bay leaf, thyme and parsnip mixture.

Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered for 30 minutes

3. Cool slightly. Discard bay leaf. In a blender, process soup in batches until smooth. Return all to pan. Stir in cream; heat through.

4. For garnish, in a large skillet, heat the butter, sugar, cumin and coriander until sugar is melted, stirring occasionally. Add pears; saute for 2-3 minutes or until crisp-tender. Arrange over servings of soup.

Wilted Spinach Salad with Butternut Squash

Make quick work of peeling butternut squash. First, prick it with a fork and give it 45 seconds in the microwave. Then, trim an inch from the base of the squash, making it stand up straight and tall while you run the peeler from top to bottom.

—MARGEE BERRY WHITE SALMON, WASHINGTON

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 16 MIN.
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- **1 cup cubed peeled butternut squash**
- **½ tsp. chili powder**
- **⅛ tsp. salt, divided**
- **4 tsp. olive oil, divided**
- **⅓ cup balsamic vinegar**
- **2 Tbsp. dry red wine or chicken broth**
- **2 Tbsp. whole-berry cranberry sauce**
- **5 cups fresh baby spinach**
- **4 slices red onion**
- **¼ cup dried cranberries**
- **⅓ cup slivered almonds, toasted**
- **⅓ cup crumbled goat cheese**
- **Coarsely ground pepper, optional**

1. In a small skillet, saute the squash, chili powder and ¼ tsp. salt in 2 tsp. oil for 11-13 minutes or until tender. Set aside; keep warm.

2. In a small saucepan, bring vinegar to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 4-6 minutes or until reduced to ¼ cup. Stir in wine, cranberry sauce, remaining oil and remaining salt. Bring to a boil; cook 1 minute longer.

3. Place spinach on a serving platter; top with onion, cranberries and the squash mixture. Drizzle with warm dressing. Sprinkle with almonds, goat cheese and pepper if desired. Serve immediately.

Cranberry Ricotta Gnocchi with Brown Butter Sauce

How do you make gnocchi as light as air? Just work quickly, handling the dough as little as possible; puffy pasta pillows will result.

—SALLY SIBTHORPE SHELBY TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

PREP: 30 MIN. + STANDING • **COOK:** 12 MIN.
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- **¾ cup dried cranberries, divided**
- **2 cups ricotta cheese**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **½ cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- **1 egg, lightly beaten**
- **¾ tsp. salt, divided**
- **4 qt. water**
- **¾ cup butter, cubed**
- **2 Tbsp. minced fresh sage**
- **½ cup chopped walnuts, toasted**
- **⅛ tsp. white pepper**

1. Finely chop ¼ cup cranberries. In a large bowl, combine the ricotta cheese, flour, Parmesan cheese, egg, ½ tsp. salt and chopped cranberries; mix until blended. On a lightly floured surface, knead 10-12 times, forming a soft dough. Cover and let rest for about 10 minutes.

2. Divide dough into four portions. On a floured surface, roll each portion into a ¾-in.-thick rope, cut into ¾-in. pieces. Press and roll each piece with a lightly floured fork.

3. In a Dutch oven, bring water to a boil. Cook gnocchi in batches for 30-60 seconds or until they float. Remove with slotted spoon; keep warm.

4. In a large heavy saucepan, cook butter over medium heat for 5 minutes. Add sage; cook 3-5 minutes longer or until butter is golden brown, stirring occasionally. Stir in the walnuts, white pepper, remaining cranberries and remaining salt. Add gnocchi; stir gently to coat.

Super Salad Butternut squash adds a taste of fall to this gently wilted salad topped with dried cranberries, almonds and goat cheese.

Jalapeno Cranberry Sauce

Pantry ingredients make this sensational sauce a year-round favorite. Another time, slather the festive sauce warm on roast pork or grilled chicken.

—ROXANNE CHAN ALBANY, CALIFORNIA

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN.
YIELD: 2⅔ CUPS

- **2 cups jellied cranberry sauce**
- **½ cup cranberry juice**
- **¼ cup red wine vinegar**
- **¼ cup jalapeno pepper jelly, preferably red**
- **¼ cup dried cranberries**
- **¼ cup finely chopped red onion**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **¾ tsp. ground allspice**

In a small saucepan, combine all ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 10-12 minutes or until thickened, stirring occasionally.

CONTINUE THE FEAST For more dishes to be thankful for, see "Side Show" (**side dishes**), *page 36*, "Home Baked for the Holidays," *page 47*, and "Roadfood" (**stuffing**), *page 83*. In fact, almost every page of this issue offers a solution to all of your Turkey Day desires. From the *Taste of Home* family to yours, Happy Thanksgiving!

Tangerine Glazed Turkey

A technique passed down from generations—drenching cheesecloth in melted butter and oil, then draping the cloth over the turkey before roasting—helps give the bird beautiful golden-brown skin. The technique also results in juicy, moist breast meat.
—JEANNE HORN DULUTH, MINNESOTA

PREP: 30 MIN.
BAKE: 3¾ HOURS + STANDING
YIELD: 14 SERVINGS (4 CUPS GRAVY)

- **1 turkey (14 to 16 lbs.)**
- **½ cup butter, softened**
- **½ cup butter, cubed**
- **1 cup canola oil**
- **2 cups tangerine juice**

GRAVY

- **2 to 3 cups chicken broth**
- **5 Tbsp. all-purpose flour**

1. Remove giblets from turkey; cover and refrigerate for gravy. Pat turkey dry; place breast side up on a rack in a roasting pan. Rub softened butter over turkey.
2. In a large saucepan, melt cubed butter; stir in oil. Saturate a four-layered 17-in. square of cheesecloth in butter mixture; drape over turkey.
3. Add tangerine juice to remaining butter mixture. Bake turkey, uncovered, at 325° for 3 hours; baste with tangerine juice mixture every 30 minutes, keeping cheesecloth moist at all times.
4. Remove and discard cheesecloth. Bake turkey 45 minutes to 1¼ hours longer or until a meat thermometer reads 180°, basting occasionally with pan drippings. Cover loosely with foil if turkey browns too quickly.
5. Remove turkey to a serving platter; cover and let stand for 20 minutes before carving. Pour drippings and loosened brown bits into a measuring cup. Skim fat, reserving ⅓ cup. Add enough broth to remaining drippings to measure 4 cups.
6. For gravy, chop reserved giblets. In a large saucepan, saute giblets in reserved fat until browned. Stir in flour until blended; gradually stir in broth mixture. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Serve with turkey.

Giblet Jabber

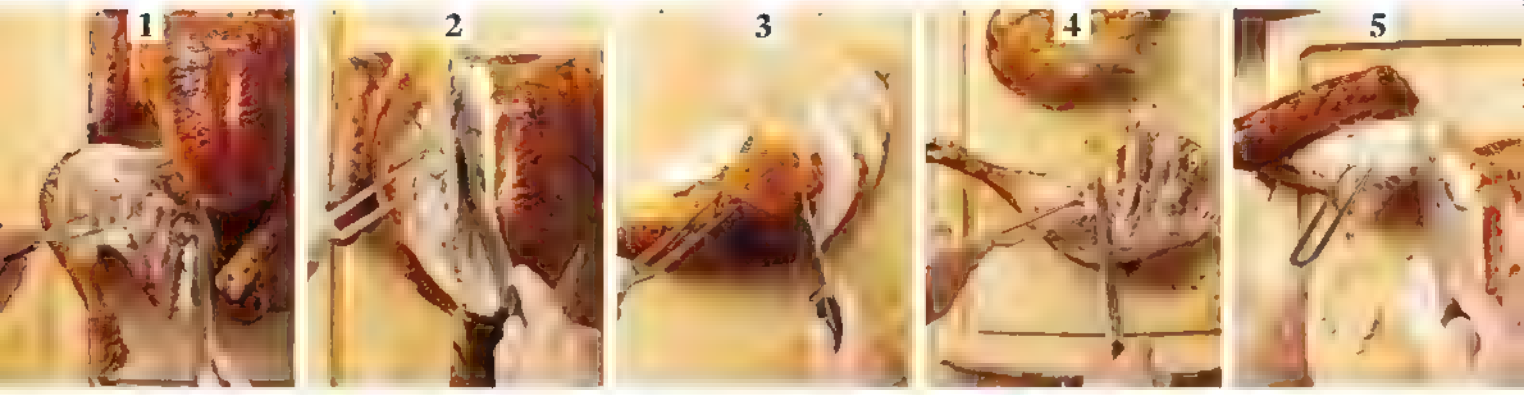
Be sure to poke around in the front and back cavities of your turkey before popping it in the oven. You'll probably find a package of giblets—the heart, liver and gizzard of the turkey. The neck also might be tucked inside one of the cavities. Pull them out, then rinse and pat dry with paper towels before using them to add fabulous flavor to gravy, including that used in our Tangerine-Glazed Turkey recipe, *left*.

NEED MORE HELP WITH YOUR TURKEY?
See "Thanksgiving 911," page 35

Flawless Carving

Instead of winging it this year, get the most out of your perfectly cooked Thanksgiving turkey with the help of our test kitchen's easy step-by-step carving guide.

❶ **Remove the Legs.** Slice through the skin between the leg and body using a large carving knife. Pull leg outward with a serving fork and cut through the hip joint, removing the entire leg from the body.
❷ **Remove the Breast.** Slice down one side of the breastbone until your knife meets the base of the turkey. Cut horizontally into the turkey near the base and remove the entire breast.
❸ **Slice the Breast.** Place breast meat on a cutting surface. Hold the meat firmly with the carving fork, then slice thinly across the grain for a tender cut.
❹ **Separate the Drumstick from the Thigh.** Cut through the joint that connects the drumstick and thigh. Thinly slice the thigh meat and remove the meat from the bone. Small drumsticks can be served whole, or to remove meat, hold the drumstick upright by the bone and slice the meat off, parallel to the bone.
❺ **Remove Wings.** Cut through the joints connecting the wing bones to the backbone. Serve wings whole.



MORE ONLINE
For additional help cutting the turkey, see **tasteofhome.com/carving**

Citrus Celebration
Classic turkey is glazed with a tangerine topper while homemade gnocchi takes a festive direction with cranberries and nuts.

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McCormick® Signature Pumpkin Pie with Vanilla Whipped Cream

INGREDIENT
1 can (15 oz.) pumpkin
1 can (14 oz.) sweetened condensed milk
2 eggs
1 tbsp. McCormick Pumpkin Pie Spice
1 frozen unbaked deep dish pie crust (9-inch)*

*Or visit mccormick.com for our Signature Pie Crust recipe.

pumpkin, milk, eggs and pumpkin pie spice in large bowl until smooth. Pour into pie crust on large foil-lined baking sheet.

KE in preheated 425°F oven 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F. Bake 40 minutes longer or until knife inserted 1 inch from crust comes out clean. Cool completely on wire rack. Garnish with Vanilla Whipped Cream. Sprinkle with additional pumpkin pie spice, if desired. Makes 8 servings.

LA WHIPPED CREAM Beat 1 cup heavy cream, ¼ cup confectioners' sugar and 1 tsp. McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract in medium bowl with electric mixer on high speed until stiff peaks form.

Choosing high-quality McCormick flavors will ensure this year's feast ends as deliciously as it began.
Visit mccormick.com and facebook.com/mccormickspice for flavorful Thanksgiving ideas.

Spiced Pumpkin Custard Pie

If it's the crust that makes you nervous about pie making, this pie is for you. Its nutty, gingery crumb crust is simply patted into the pie plate.

—CHARLENE CHAMBERS
ORMOND BEACH, FLORIDA

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 40 MIN. + COOLING
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- ¾ cup chopped pecans, toasted
- 1 cup plus 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. salt
- 7 Tbsp. shortening
- 2 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. ice water

FILLING

- 2 eggs
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¾ tsp. ground allspice
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 can (15 oz.) solid-pack pumpkin
- 1 can (12 oz.) evaporated milk
- Whipped cream, optional
- Additional ground cinnamon, optional

1. Place pecans in a food processor; cover and process until finely ground. In a large bowl, combine the pecans, flour, ginger and salt. Cut in shortening until mixture is crumbly. Gradually add water, tossing with a fork until dough forms a ball. Press dough onto the bottom and up the sides of an ungreased 9-in. pie plate.
2. For filling, in a large bowl, beat the eggs, sugar, spices and salt until smooth. Beat in pumpkin. Gradually beat in milk. Pour into crust.
3. Bake at 400° for 40-45 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cover edges with foil during the last 15 minutes to prevent overbrowning if necessary. Cool on a wire rack. Garnish with whipped cream and additional cinnamon if desired. Refrigerate leftovers. ■

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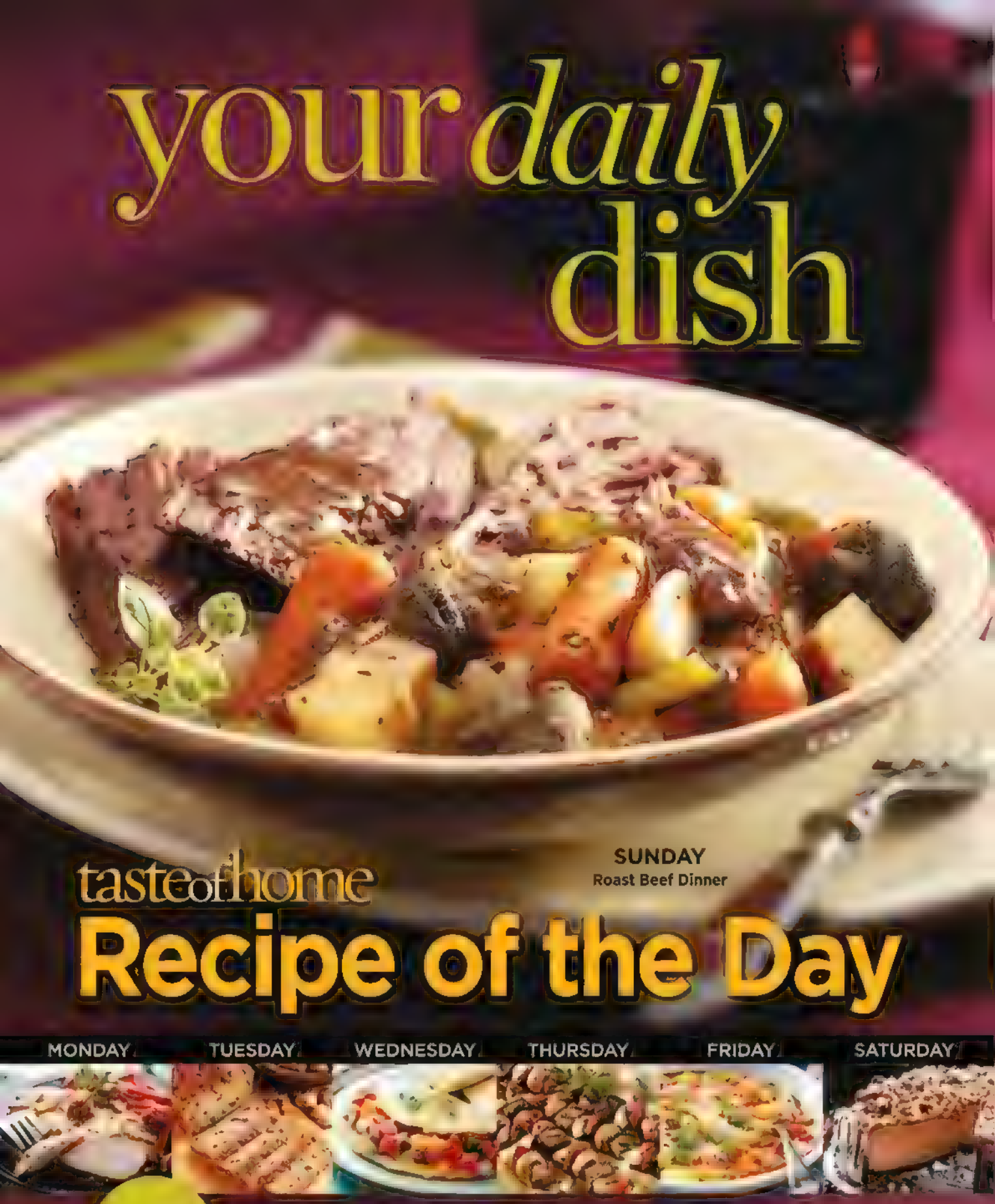

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Kitchen Therapist Kristen believes that cooking and eating with others builds solid bonds.

Family Inspires Tasty Success

This Minnesota resident proves that early exposure to cooking means **delicious dishes,** winning recipes and lifelong friends.

Sitting down for family meals has always been a memorable experience for Kristen Shabaz of Minneapolis. Preparing meals with her parents actually began her love of cooking.

"The kitchen was always a comforting place for me, whether I was baking cookies with my mom or watching my dad make new, exciting dishes," she says. "Next to Julia Child, my father is my biggest culinary inspiration. He never made the same thing twice, and he exposed us to so many different foods."

Her brother, who was adopted from India, also was responsible for introducing Kristen to a new world of flavor. "My mom and dad would bring us to Indian festivals as a way for him to experience his culture," says Kristen. "We'd be the only non-Indians in the room and were welcomed with open arms. It was the most amazing food. I can't even tell you what we ate, but I've retained those aromas and tastes in my mind. I eat Indian food regularly because it brings back so many wonderful memories."

Now, with her own kitchen and family to feed, Kristen relishes cooking for, and with, those she loves. "I cook for my husband and family the most, but I'm always making food and sharing it with others," she says. "I host a monthly 'kitchen therapy' session with my three girlfriends. We cook, eat, talk, laugh, cry and get our hands dirty. We have a wonderful time."

It's also the inspiration behind Kristen's winning Real Women Of Philadelphia recipe. "A week before the contest, I showed my friends how to make apple turnovers with phyllo dough. As we talked about our busy lives, I was inspired to make a savory turnover using Philadelphia Savory Garlic Cooking Creme. That was it: My idea became a reality the next day when I entered the recipe and it earned me a spot as a finalist in the competition."

Kristen's winning turnovers, featured here, can also be found at **realwomenofphiladelphia.com**.

Savory Garlic Beef & Broccoli Turnovers

The savory filling makes these a winner for dinner. Phyllo pastry provides a shortcut. They freeze well, so stash some for later.
—**KRISTEN SHABAZ** MINNEAPOLIS

PREP: 40 MIN. ■ **BAKE:** 12 MIN.
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 cups fresh broccoli florets, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- ⅛ tsp. pepper
- ¼ to ½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes, optional
- 1 carton (10 oz.) Philadelphia Savory Garlic Cooking Creme, divided
- ½ cup sour cream
- 24 sheets phyllo dough
- 6 Tbsp. butter, melted
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh parsley

1. In a large skillet, cook beef and onion in oil over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Add broccoli; cook 2-3 minutes longer or until broccoli is crisp-tender.
2. Stir in flour, salt, pepper and pepper flakes, if desired, until blended. Set aside and refrigerate 3 tablespoons cooking creme for topping. Gradually add sour cream and remaining cooking creme to beef mixture. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 1-2 minutes or until blended. Remove from the heat.
3. Lightly brush one sheet of phyllo dough with butter; place another sheet of phyllo on top and brush with butter. Top with another sheet of phyllo. (Keep remaining phyllo covered with plastic wrap and a damp towel to prevent it from drying out.)
4. Cut the three layered sheets lengthwise in half. Place 3 tablespoons of beef filling on lower corner of each strip. Fold dough over filling, forming a triangle. Fold triangle up, then fold triangle over, forming another triangle. Continue folding, like a flag, until you come to the end of the strip. Brush end of dough with butter and press onto triangle to seal. Turn triangle and brush top with melted butter. Repeat with remaining strip of dough and sheets of phyllo.
5. Set on greased baking sheet. Bake at 400° for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Sprinkle with parsley; serve with reserved cooking creme. ■

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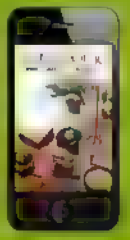

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EASY SOLUTIONS from readers & our test kitchen

Thanksgiving 911

Even the most experienced cook can use a little **help on Turkey Day.** Pull off the holiday meal without a hitch with these **tips** and **hotline helpers.**

Turkey Tips

- Plan about 1½ pounds of turkey per person, factoring in a little extra for leftovers or Uncle Fred's third helping.
- Leave plenty of time for the bird to thaw in the fridge. Allow 1 day for every 4 to 5 pounds of turkey. That means a 15-pound frozen bird should be in the fridge Monday morning if you want it in the oven Thursday.
- Preheat the oven to 325°, then roast the bird for 15-20 minutes per pound.
- It takes 3-4 hours to roast a 14- to 16-pound turkey (and only about 20 minutes to eat it).
- Check doneness by placing a meat thermometer into the thickest part of the thigh, taking care not to touch the bone. The temperature reading should be 165°.
- Let turkey sit for 15-20 minutes, tented loosely with foil, after removing from oven. Then carve away (use our guide, *page 26*).
- Use a large roasting pan that's *not* nonstick. You'll get better drippings, which will make for better-tasting gravy.

Stuffed Right

- Stuff the turkey just before it goes in the oven. Remove giblets and rinse cavity first.
- Lightly spoon stuffing into the turkey's body and neck cavity. Packing it in too tightly prevents the interior of the bird from reaching safe temperatures.

Gravy Train

- Stir the gravy with a wire whisk to avoid lumps. If they still show up, strain them out with a fine mesh colander or gravy strainer.
- Thoroughly cook the flour in the fat (before adding liquid) to avoid a starchy taste.
- Salt is key to the best flavor. Start with about ½ tsp. for 4 cups of liquid. Then sprinkle in a tiny bit at a time, stirring and tasting. ■

MORE ONLINE

Need to know how to smoke a turkey? Fry a turkey? Or go traditional? Find video guides, recipes, tips and more at **tasteofhome.com/thanksgivingday**

Hotline Heaven

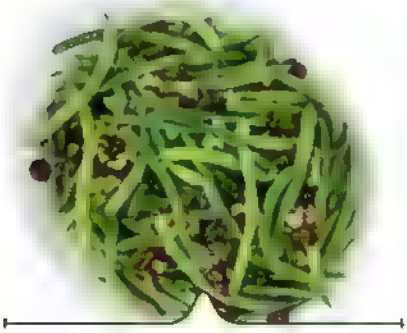
Need help on Thanksgiving Day? It's just a phone call away.

- **USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline** Food safety specialists can answer your turkey questions weekdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time, with Thanksgiving Day hours of 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Eastern. Call 888-674-6854 or email ***mphotline.fsis@usda.gov***
- **Turkey Talk-Line** The Butterball Turkey Talk-Line employs more than 50 professionally trained home economists and nutritionists to answer questions during November and December. (They get about 100,000!) Call 800-288-8372 or email ***talkline@butterball.com*** beginning Nov. 1.
- **Fleischmann's Yeast Baker's Hotline** From bread to rolls, help for baked goods is here. Available year-round, Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Eastern time, 800-777-4959.
- **Libby Consumer Hot Line** Not known for your pumpkin pie? Call this number for solutions. Open year-round, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Eastern time, 800-854-0374.
- **Ocean Spray Consumer Affairs** Cranberry questions are answered year-round, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Eastern time, 800-662-3263.

Side Show

speedy and special

Watch out, turkey! These **savory sides** may steal the show this Thanksgiving.



Green Bean and Walnut Salad

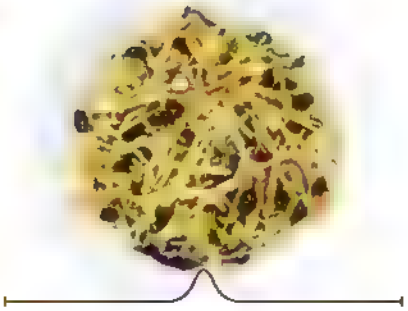
Cook 3 lbs. trimmed **fresh green beans** in boiling water for 4-7 minutes or until crisp-tender; drain. Combine ¾ cup chopped **walnuts**, ⅓ cup **dried cranberries** and beans. Whisk 6 Tbsp. each **olive oil** and **red wine vinegar**. Stir in 3 minced **garlic cloves**, ½ tsp. **salt** and ½ tsp. **pepper**; toss with green bean mixture. Refrigerate until serving. *Makes 12 servings.*

—**DEBORAH GIUSTI**
HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

Cheddar Mashed Cauliflower

Cook 2 medium heads **cauliflower** broken into florets in 1 in. boiling water until tender. Drain, mash with ⅓ cup **2% milk**, 1 Tbsp. minced **fresh rosemary** and ½ tsp. **salt**. Stir in 1 cup shredded **sharp cheddar cheese**. *Makes 6 servings.*

—**CHRYSTAL BAKER**
STUDIO CITY, CALIFORNIA



Honey-Orange Broccoli Slaw

Combine 1 package (12 oz.) **broccoli coleslaw mix**, ⅓ cup **sliced almonds** and ⅓ cup **raisins**. Whisk 2 Tbsp. each **honey**, **olive oil** and **orange juice**. Stir in 4 tsp. grated **orange peel** and ¼ tsp. **salt**. Add to coleslaw mix, toss to coat. *Makes 6 servings.*

—**DEBBIE CASSAR** ROCKFORD, MICHIGAN

Braised Dill Potatoes

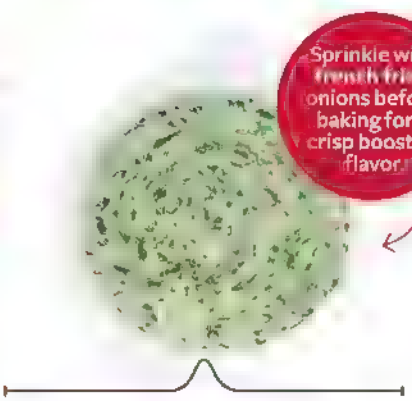
Arrange 1 lb. **fingerling potatoes** in a single layer in a large saucepan. Add 1 cup **chicken broth** and 1 Tbsp. **butter**; cover and cook for 10 minutes or until almost tender. Uncover; cook 8-10 minutes longer or until potatoes are tender and broth is evaporated. Press each potato lightly to crush. Sprinkle with 3 Tbsp. **dill**. Season with **salt** and **pepper**. Cook for 2-3 minutes or until bottoms are lightly browned. Serve with sour cream. *Makes 4 servings.*

—**AMIE SCHMIDT** SAN DIEGO

Stuffed Sweet Potato Casserole

Scrub and pierce 4 large **sweet potatoes**. Microwave until tender, turning once. Cut each potato in half lengthwise. Scoop out pulp, leaving thin shells. Mash pulp with ½ cup hot **caramel ice cream topping** and 2 Tbsp. **butter**; spoon into shells. Place on baking sheets, sprinkle with 1½ cups **miniature marshmallows** and ½ cup chopped **pecans**. Broil 3-4 in. from the heat for 2-3 minutes or until marshmallows are golden brown. *Makes 8 servings.*

—**PAULINE DETTREY**
MONUMENT, COLORADO



Three-Cheese Creamed Spinach

Thaw and squeeze dry 2 packages (10 oz. each) **frozen chopped spinach**. Place in a large saucepan with 1½ cups spreadable **chive and onion cream cheese**, 1 cup grated **Parmesan cheese**, 1 cup shredded **part-skim mozzarella cheese**, ¼ cup **butter** and ¼ tsp. **pepper**. Cook and stir over medium heat for 8-10 minutes or until heated through. *Makes 6 servings.* ■

—**KATHY VAZQUEZ** AMARILLO, TEXAS

MORE ONLINE
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Fall Favorites

from the Taste of Home Test Kitchen

1 "Grate" holidays await

Grate more with less effort with the unique technology of the 6-sided Cuisipro grater, perfect for every-thing from cheese to chocolate!

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2 Get your just desserts

Everyone will think dessert is homemade thanks to Kozy Shack. Dress up your favorite flavor with some fruit or crumbled cookies, and dessert has never been easier.

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3 Serve it up in style

Make your entertaining a breeze during the holidays and use the same dish for baking and serving. This beautiful Chantal Stoneware transitions easily from oven to table.

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4 Secret ingredient for a lot of flavor

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New Twists on Old Favorites

You'll love these **flavor-packed spins** on **classic family dinners,** all with quick prep and fresh accents.

We've compiled a week's worth of familiar meals with inviting adaptations. They've got something for everyone, and of course, they're easy!

PASTA BOWL MONDAY

Caramelized Onion & Garlic Pasta

My mom's love for pasta inspired this easy angel hair with tomatoes and bacon
—LACY JO MATHESON
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 35 MIN.
YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

- ¼ cup butter, cubed
- 2 large sweet onions, thinly sliced
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- ⅛ tsp. salt
- 8 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups grape tomatoes, halved
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup olive oil, divided
- 1 pkg. (16 oz.) uncooked angel hair pasta
- 9 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
- ⅔ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- ½ tsp. coarsely ground pepper
- Fresh basil leaves, optional

1. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, melt butter. Add the onions, pepper flakes and salt; saute until onions are tender. Stir in garlic. Reduce heat to medium low; cook, stirring occasionally, for 30-40 minutes or until the onions are deep golden brown.
2. Add the grape tomatoes, vinegar and 2 Tbsp. oil to the skillet. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain pasta, toss with onion mixture.
3. Drizzle with remaining olive oil. Sprinkle with bacon, Parmesan cheese and pepper, and heat through. Garnish with fresh basil if desired.

Inspired Italian Caramelized onion and crisp bacon turn a simple pasta dinner into a new family favorite.

ON THE SIDE

Savory Romano Sticks

Unfold 2 sheets thawed **puff pastry**. Brush with 1 beaten **egg** Sprinkle with 1½ cups grated **Romano cheese** and 1 Tbsp **dried basil**. Cut each sheet into 10 1 in. strips. Place on greased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 10-13 minutes or until golden brown. *Makes 20 pastry sticks.* **—TIM AILPORT** WEST LAKELAND, MINNESOTA

Family friendly Who doesn't love enchiladas? This all-veggie version is in and out of the oven in 15 minutes.

CHICK TUESDAY

Chicken Stuffed with Broccolini & Cheese

My version of Chicken Cordon Bleu uses Broccolini in the filling and panko for crunch. Broccolini looks like small broccoli, but we think it's a little sweeter and more tender.
—**CHER SCHWARTZ** ELLISVILLE, MISSOURI

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 15 MIN.
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- 4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (6 oz. each)
- 8 Broccolini stalks or ⅔ cup chopped fresh broccoli
- ½ cup shredded Italian cheese blend
- 3 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. garlic powder
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- ⅛ tsp. paprika
- 2 egg whites
- 1 Tbsp. fat-free milk
- ¾ cup panko (Japanese) bread crumbs
- 1 tsp. dried parsley flakes
- Olive oil-flavored cooking spray

1. Flatten chicken breasts to ½ in. thickness. Place two stalks of Broccolini lengthwise down the center of each chicken breast; sprinkle with 2 Tbsp. cheese. Fold over and secure with toothpicks.
2. Combine the flour, salt, garlic powder, pepper and paprika in a shallow bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk egg whites and milk. In another bowl, combine bread crumbs and parsley. Coat chicken with flour mixture, dip in egg white mixture, then coat with crumb mixture.
3. Place chicken on a baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Spritz tops of chicken with cooking spray. Bake, uncovered, at 450° for 15-20 minutes or until a meat thermometer reads 170°. Discard toothpicks.

ON THE SIDE
Rosemary Polenta

Prepare 1 tube (1 lb.) **polenta** according to package directions for soft polenta, stirring in ½ cup grated **Parmesan cheese**, ¼ tsp. **dried rosemary** and enough water to achieve desired consistency. Garnish with butter, parsley and pepper if desired. *Makes 4 servings.*
—**CASANDRA RITTENHOUSE** NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

WEDNESDAY PIZZAZZ

Spinach Mushroom Enchiladas

Lime, cilantro and Jack cheese lend Mexican flavors to this veggie-filled version of a real crowd-pleaser. —**EVANGELINE BRADFORD** ERLANGER, KENTUCKY

PREP: 35 MIN. • **BAKE:** 14 MIN.
YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

- 1 lb. baby portobello mushrooms, chopped
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ cup white wine or chicken broth
- 12 oz. chopped fresh spinach, coarsely chopped
- ½ tsp. seasoned salt, divided
- ¾ cup water
- ¼ cup lime juice
- 1 Tbsp. chicken bouillon granules
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder
- 1½ cups (12 oz.) sour cream
- ½ cup minced fresh cilantro
- 12 corn tortillas (6 in.), warmed
- 1½ cups (6 oz.) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- Crushed red pepper flakes, optional

1. In a large skillet, saute mushrooms and onion in butter until tender. Add garlic; cook 1 minute longer. Set aside half of the mushroom mixture for sauce.
2. Add wine to remaining mushroom mixture; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Add spinach and ¼ tsp. seasoned salt; cook until spinach wilts and liquid evaporates.
3. In a large saucepan, bring the water, lime juice, chicken bouillon, garlic powder and remaining seasoned salt to a boil, stirring to dissolve bouillon. Stir in the sour cream, cilantro and reserved mushroom mixture; heat through.
4. Place 3 Tbsp. spinach mixture down the center of each tortilla, roll up and place seam side down in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. baking dish. Spoon sauce over top; sprinkle with cheese. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 14-18 minutes or until heated through. Add pepper flakes, if desired.

ON THE SIDE
Harvest Salads with Pear Vinaigrette

Peel and core 1 **pear**; place in small food processor. Add ⅓ cup **oil and vinegar salad dressing**; cover and process until smooth. Toss 1 package (5 oz.) **spring greens**, 2 sliced **pears**, 6 oz. thinly sliced **Gouda cheese** and ¾ cup **honey-roasted sliced almonds**. Top with dressing.
—**CHERYL PERRY** HERTFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

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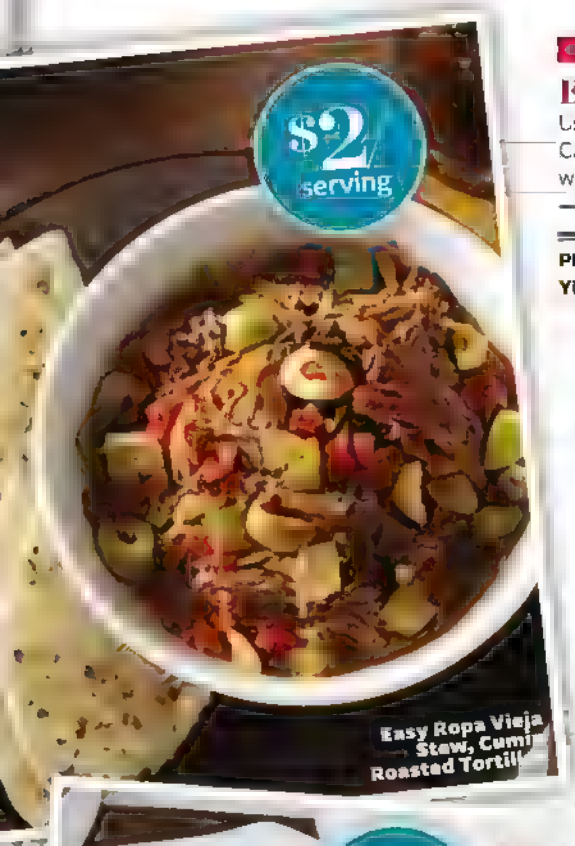


JET SET THURSDAY

Easy Ropa Vieja Stew

Use your slow cooker for this meaty Cuban classic, which offers bold flavors without a lot of hands-on time.
—**DENISE NYLAND** PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA

PREP: 25 MIN. • **COOK:** 6 HOURS
YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

- **4 lbs. boneless beef chuck roast, cut in half**
- **2 Tbsp. olive oil**
- **2 large onions, coarsely chopped**
- **2 large green peppers, coarsely chopped**
- **4 jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced**
- **1 habanero pepper, seeded and minced**
- **3 cans (14½ oz. each) diced tomatoes, undrained**
- **½ cup water**
- **6 garlic cloves, minced**
- **2 Tbsp. minced fresh cilantro**
- **4 tsp. beef bouillon granules**
- **2 tsp. pepper**
- **1½ tsp. ground cumin**
- **1 tsp. dried oregano**
- **½ cup pimiento-stuffed olives, coarsely chopped**
- **Hot cooked rice, optional**

1. In a large skillet, brown beef in oil on all sides. Transfer meat to a 5-qt. slow cooker. Add onions and peppers. Combine tomatoes, water, garlic, cilantro, beef bouillon, pepper, cumin and oregano; pour over vegetables.
2. Cover and cook on low for 6-8 hours or until meat is tender. Remove beef, cool slightly. Skim fat from cooking juices, stir in olives. Shred beef with two forks and return to slow cooker; heat through. Serve with rice if desired.

Editor's Note: *Wear disposable gloves when cutting hot peppers; the oils can burn skin. Avoid touching your face.*

ON THE SIDE
Cumin Roasted Tortillas

Combine ¼ cup **olive oil**, 1 tsp. ground **cumin**, 1 tsp. dried **oregano** and ¼ tsp. **salt**; brush over 8 **flour tortillas**. Roll up and place on a baking sheet. Bake at 425° for 4-5 minutes or until heated through. *Serves 8.*
—**EMILY SEEFELDT** RED WING, MINNESOTA

FRIDAY COMFORT

Presto Pizza Patties

Craving both beef and pizza? These patties feature both in an open-faced sandwich.
—**BARBARA SCHINDLER** NAPOLEON, OHIO

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN.
YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

- **2 egg whites**
- **½ cup seasoned bread crumbs**
- **½ cup finely chopped green pepper**
- **1 can (8 oz.) pizza sauce, divided**
- **¼ cup finely chopped onion**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **1 lb. lean ground beef (90% lean)**
- **6 slices Italian bread (½ in. thick)**
- **2 tsp. olive oil**
- **1½ tsp. Italian seasoning**
- **½ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**

1. In a large bowl, combine the egg whites, bread crumbs, green pepper, ⅓ cup pizza sauce, onion and garlic. Crumble beef over mixture and mix well. Shape into six oval patties.
2. In a large nonstick skillet, cook patties over medium heat for 4-5 minutes on each side or until a meat thermometer reads 160° and the juices run clear.
3. Meanwhile, place bread on an ungreased baking sheet. Brush with oil and sprinkle with Italian seasoning. Broil 4 in. from heat for 2-3 minutes or until lightly toasted.
4. Microwave remaining pizza sauce, covered, on high for 10-20 seconds or until heated through. Place patties on toast; top with cheese and sauce.

ON THE SIDE
Chili-Spiced Sweet Potato Wedges

Cut 3 peeled **sweet potatoes** into 8 wedges. Toss with 2 Tbsp. **olive oil**, 1 Tbsp. **sugar** and 1 tsp. **chili powder**. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a baking sheet. Bake at 425° for 20-25 minutes or until tender, turning once. *Serves 6.* ■
—**TONI CORDOVA** PUEBLO, COLORADO

Easy Meals for Busy Families
Make weeknight dinners hassle-free with *Simple & Delicious*, our sister magazine. Each issue includes menus, plan-ahead ideas and goof-proof tips. For a free trial issue, visit **tasteofhome.com/freesimple**.

Spoonful of Winter Wonderful

Cozy up to this immune-boosting soup to **ward off the winter blues** — and maybe even a cold or two.

Lentil Tomato Soup

Double the recipe and share this hearty soup with neighbors and loved ones on cold winter nights. I serve it with cornbread for dunking.

—**MICHELLE CURTIS** BAKER CITY, OREGON

PREP: 15 MIN. • **COOK:** 30 MIN.
YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

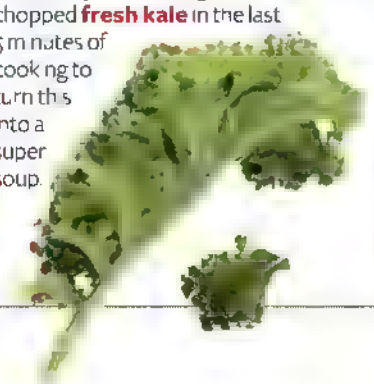
- **4½ cups water**
- **4 medium carrots, sliced**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **⅔ cup dried lentils, rinsed**
- **1 can (6 oz.) tomato paste**
- **2 Tbsp. minced fresh parsley**
- **1 Tbsp. brown sugar**
- **1 Tbsp. white vinegar**
- **1 tsp. garlic salt**
- **½ tsp. dried thyme**
- **¼ tsp. dill weed**
- **¼ tsp. dried tarragon**
- **¼ tsp. pepper**

In a large saucepan, combine the water, carrots, onion and lentils; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 20-25 minutes or until vegetables and lentils are tender. Stir in the remaining ingredients; return to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes to allow flavors to blend.

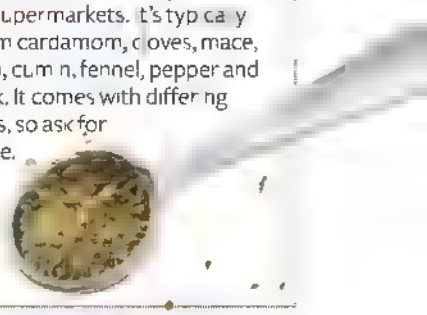
Nutrition Facts *¾ cup equals 138 calories, trace fat (trace saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 351 mg sodium, 27 g carbohydrate, 9 g fiber, 8 g protein. Diabetic Exchanges: 1 starch, 1 lean meat, 1 vegetable.* ■

Punch Up the Protein Meat-eaters won't get the health benefits of this soup unless they eat it. Add ½ lb. sliced cooked **turkey sausage** to satisfy them.

Summon the Superpowers Kale, a true superfood, can keep your immune system strong. Add 3 cups of chopped **fresh kale** in the last 5 minutes of cooking to turn this into a super soup.



Go Spicy If you are felled by a cold, add a sinus-clearing kick with ¾ tsp. of **garam masala**, an Indian spice blend found at supermarkets. It's typically made from cardamom, cloves, mace, cinnamon, cumin, fennel, pepper and fenugreek. It comes with differing heat levels, so ask for a spicy one.



Health Briefs

News to **peruse** for a better life | BY SARA ALTSHUL

The Good-For-You Feast

Who wants to nibble away at Thanksgiving's joys by worrying whether the feast is nutritious? After all, you cook far less indulgent food all year long, so for turkey day you're free to splurge. But guess what? Your three favorite Thanksgiving foods, *below*, have surprising health benefits. For recipes that use these ingredients, see "A Celebrated Gathering," *page 22*.

Turkey That delectable bird you're serving is among the few high-protein foods that keep after-dinner insulin levels from spiking. (Tuna and egg whites are two others.) Plus, turkey has decent levels of omega-3 fatty acids, those good-for-you fats. Organic or free-range birds tend to contain even higher levels of omega-3s.

Pumpkin, butternut squash and acorn squash Roasted, pureed, served atop a salad, *left*, or blended into that scrumptious pie, these bright-orange veggies are key sources of some powerful antioxidants: alpha- and beta-carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin and beta-cryptoxanthin, all of which lower your risk of heart disease and cancer. Diets rich in lutein and zeaxanthin also slow the development of age-related eye disease. More good news: These antioxidants are best absorbed in meals that contain some fat, which shouldn't be a problem on Thanksgiving! Sweet potatoes, by the way, also are rich sources of beta-carotene.

Cranberries Researchers know that the berries have antioxidant and anti-cancer benefits. But if you're among the thousands who deal with annoying, recurring urinary tract infections, you'll appreciate cranberries' role in preventing UTIs. Here's the how-to for prevention: Drink an 8-ounce glass of sugar-free cranberry juice three times a day.

Here's how to ace the lunchtime test

You can make two smart moves to help your child make better lunch choices in the school cafeteria, says Debra Leckrider, professor of education at Butler University in Indianapolis. Leckrider is researching lunch programs in five Indianapolis school districts that serve some 82,000 students.

1. Talk to your child about food. If you want her to eat more servings of fruits and vegetables, or to make choices from each of the five food groups, tell her so directly, advises Leckrider. Another idea: Suggest that your child hold off on buying snacks until she's eaten a balanced lunch that includes fruit, veggies, whole grains and lean protein.

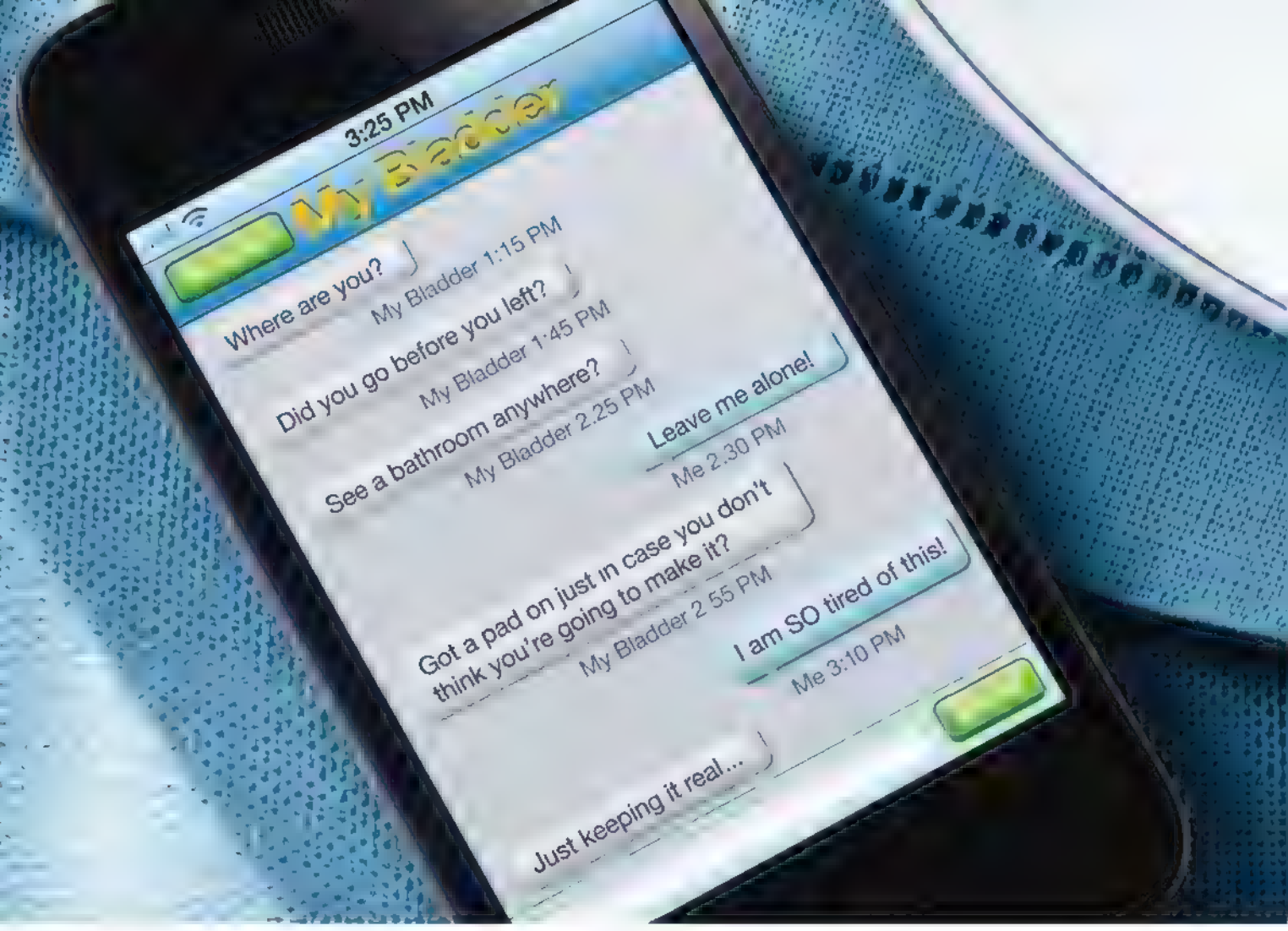
2. Make a school lunch date. Join your child for lunch in the school cafeteria to get a kid's-eye view. You can see firsthand what's available and help your student make the healthiest choices based on the menu. In some cases, you might find that the cafeteria's choices are so limited that brown-bagging it is a better option.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Sea salt has less sodium than **table salt.**

ANSWER: False. And if you got this wrong, you're not alone. According to the American Heart Association, 61 percent of people responding to an April survey said that sea salt is a low-sodium alternative to table salt. Truth is, it's not. Sea salt is chemically identical to table salt (as is kosher salt) and contains exactly the same amount of sodium. However, 1 teaspoon of coarse sea salt may indeed contain less sodium than 1 teaspoon of fine table salt simply because the teaspoon doesn't hold as much of the coarser sea salt. ■

PHOTOS: FUSE / GETTY IMAGES (BOY); JULIE TOY / GETTY IMAGES (SALT)


3:25 PM
My Bladder
Where are you?
My Bladder 1:15 PM
Did you go before you left?
My Bladder 1:45 PM
See a bathroom anywhere?
My Bladder 2:25 PM
Leave me alone!
Me 2:30 PM
Got a pad on just in case you don't think you're going to make it?
My Bladder 2:55 PM
I am SO tired of this!
Me 3:10 PM
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*Results may vary

Enough already!

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If you have certain stomach problems, glaucoma, or cannot empty your bladder, you should not take Toviaz

Toviaz may cause allergic reactions that may be serious. If you experience swelling of the face, lips, throat, or tongue, stop taking Toviaz and get emergency help

Medicines like Toviaz can cause blurred vision, drowsiness, and decreased sweating. Use caution when driving, doing unsafe tasks, or in especially hot environments, until you know how Toviaz affects you. Drinking alcohol while taking medicines such as Toviaz may cause increased drowsiness

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extended release tablets 4mg and 8mg

IMPORTANT FACTS

Toviaz®
fesoterodine fumarate
extended release tablets 4mg and 8mg

(TOH-vee-as)

ABOUT OVERACTIVE BLADDER

Overactive bladder happens when the bladder muscle squeezes too often or when you don't want it to. You may have wetting accidents (urge urinary incontinence). You may have a strong need to urinate right away (urgency). You may also have to go too often (frequency).

WHO IS TOVIAZ FOR?

Who can take TOVIAZ?

Adults 18 years and older with symptoms of overactive bladder
TOVIAZ has not been studied in children

Who should not take TOVIAZ?

Do not take TOVIAZ if you.

- Are not able to empty your bladder (urinary retention).
- Your stomach empties slowly (gastric retention).
- Have an eye problem called "uncontrolled narrow-angle glaucoma."
- Are allergic to TOVIAZ or any of its ingredients or to Detrol or Detrol LA.

BEFORE YOU START TOVIAZ

Tell your doctor about all your medical conditions, including:

- Stomach or intestinal problems or problems with constipation.
- Problems emptying your bladder or if you have a weak urine stream.
- Treatment for an eye problem called narrow-angle glaucoma.
- Kidney or liver problems.
- A condition called myasthenia gravis.
- If you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant. It is not known if TOVIAZ can harm your unborn baby.
- If you are breastfeeding. It is not known if TOVIAZ passes into your breast milk or if it can harm your baby.

Before starting on TOVIAZ, tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins and herbal products. TOVIAZ may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how TOVIAZ works. Especially tell your doctor if you are taking antibiotics or antifungal medicines.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF TOVIAZ

TOVIAZ may cause allergic reactions that may be serious. Symptoms of a serious allergic reaction may include swelling of the face, lips, throat or tongue. If you experience these symptoms, you should stop taking TOVIAZ and get emergency medical help right away

The most common side effects are:

- Dry mouth
- Constipation

TOVIAZ may cause other less common side effects, including:

- Dry eyes
- Trouble emptying the bladder

These are not all of the possible side effects of TOVIAZ.
For a complete list, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

HOW TO TAKE TOVIAZ

- Take TOVIAZ exactly as your doctor tells you.
- Your doctor may give you the lower 4 mg dose of TOVIAZ if you have certain medical conditions, such as severe kidney problems.
- Take TOVIAZ with liquid and swallow the tablet whole. Do not chew, divide or crush the tablet.
- You can take TOVIAZ with or without food.
- If you miss a dose of TOVIAZ, begin taking TOVIAZ again the next day. Do not take two doses of TOVIAZ in the same day.

Things you should keep in mind when taking TOVIAZ:

- Use caution in driving, operating machinery, or doing other dangerous activities until you know how TOVIAZ affects you. Blurred vision and drowsiness are possible side effects of medicines such as TOVIAZ.
- Use caution in hot environments. Decreased sweating and severe heat illness can occur when medicines such as TOVIAZ are used in a hot environment.
- Drinking alcohol while taking medicines such as TOVIAZ may cause increased drowsiness.

WHAT IS TOVIAZ?

TOVIAZ is a prescription medicine used in **adults** to treat symptoms of a condition called **overactive bladder**, including:

- Urge urinary incontinence—leaking or wetting accidents due to a strong need to urinate.
- Urinary urgency—having a strong need to urinate right away
- Urinary frequency—having to urinate too often.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- This is only a summary of important information. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for complete product information.
- Go to www.Toviaz.com.
- Call **1-877-9-TOVIAZ**.

Uninsured? Need help paying for Pfizer medicine?
Pfizer has programs that can help.
Call **1-866-706-2400** or visit www.PfizerHelpfulAnswers.com.

helpful answers™

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BAKING holiday GUIDE

Home-Baked for the Holidays

PRODUCED BY DEBORAH WAGMAN | DESIGN CHAD JOHNSTON | PHOTOS GREG SCHEIDEMANN
FOOD STYLING JENNIFER PETERSON, SUE HOSS | SET STYLING SUE MITCHELL

Bakers, start your ovens. **This is your time to shine.** Whether you'll be creating cookies, breads or showstopping desserts, this guide is here to make your baking sparkle as brightly as the season itself.

CAKES 48 PIES 52 CHEESECAKE 54 COOKIES 56 YEAST ROLLS 61 QUICK BREAD 63

1 Cake, 3 Ways

Behold the **season's most adaptable cake.** Customize your creation by choosing from a trio of **fab fillings** and a gallery of extraordinary embellishments.

EASY AND ELEGANT: ADORNED WITH [illegible]

ALL DRESSED UP: CROWNED WITH A WHITE CHOCOLATE RIBBON

The cake's name says it all. Plus, it's tall, dark and delicious. —**BILLIE B. ISAACS** MIAMISBURG, OHIO

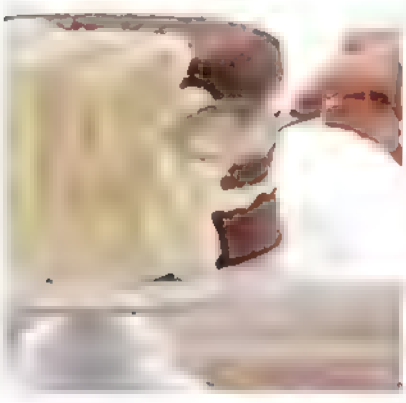
PREP: 40 MIN. **BAKE:** 24 MIN.
YIELD: 12 SERVINGS

- **1 cup butter, softened**
- **2½ cups sugar**
- **5 eggs**
- **1½ tsp. vanilla extract**
- **2¾ cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup baking cocoa**
- **2 tsp. baking soda**
- **¾ tsp. baking powder**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **1½ cups water**

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa, baking soda, baking powder and salt; add to the creamed mixture alternately with water, beating well after each addition.

2. Pour into three greased and floured 9-in. round baking pans. Bake at 350° for 24 to 28 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes; remove cakes from pans and transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

ABSOLUTELY SPECTACULAR: TOPPED WITH GLAMOROUS CHOCOLATE RUFFLES.



Spoon-Swirl Technique

To decorate your cake with graceful swirls, all you need is the tip of a spoon. To apply, scoop a generous amount of frosting onto the back of the spoon. Place the spoon on the cake with its tip in the 12 o'clock position, then swirl the spoon in a half circle to the left, ending in the 6 o'clock position. Repeat until cake is covered.

Create Chocolate Ribbons

Combine 8 oz. melted white candy coating and 1 Tbsp. oil. Using a small offset spatula, spread mixture thinly in an 8-in. length on freezer paper. Dry slightly; trim edges to form an inch-wide ribbon. Peel ribbon from paper and fold into a loop as shown. Repeat, making 13 loops. Secure loops to top of frosted cake using a dab of frosting.

Girolle How-To

Mount chocolate roll on girolle according to manufacturer's directions. Alternating between room temperature and refrigerator as needed to bring roll to correct temperature, rotate cutter over chocolate roll lightly, releasing ruffles in 3- to 4-in. pieces. Refrigerate ruffles until ready to arrange on frosted cake.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: WINTER WHITE FROSTING AS FILLING, RASPBERRY FILLING, ESPRESSO FILLING

Winter White Frosting & Filling

In a microwave, melt 1 lb. chopped **white baking chocolate**; stir until smooth. Cool to room temperature. In a large bowl, beat three 8-oz. pkgs. softened **cream cheese** with ¼ cup softened **butter** until light and fluffy. Beat in cooled baking chocolate and 2 Tbsp. **lemon juice** until smooth. Spread 2 cups on tops of bottom and middle cake layers; spread remaining frosting over cake. *Yield: 8 cups.*

For frosting only: Use 12 oz. chopped white baking chocolate, 18 oz. cream cheese, 3 Tbsp. butter and 4½ tsp. lemon juice; follow directions above. *Yield: 6 cups.*

If frosting cake with spoon-swirl technique, double recipe.

—TASTE OF HOME FOOD STYLISTS

Raspberry Filling

In a small bowl, beat ¾ cup **heavy whipping cream** until it begins to thicken. Add ⅓ cup **red raspberry preserves**, 2¼ tsp. **sugar** and 1½ tsp. **raspberry liqueur**; beat until stiff peaks form. Spread on tops of bottom and middle cake layers. *Yield: 2 cups.* **—LAURA MCDOWELL** LAKE VILLA, ILLINOIS

Espresso Filling

In a small bowl, mix 2 Tbsp. instant **espresso powder** and 1½ tsp. hot water until smooth; cool. In a large bowl, beat 1½ cups **Mascarpone cheese**, 1 cup **confectioners' sugar** (sifted), ¾ cup **heavy whipping cream**, 1½ tsp. **vanilla extract** and espresso mixture on medium speed until creamy and slightly thickened (don't overmix). Spread on tops of bottom and middle cake layers. *Yield: 2¼ cups.* **—MEGAN BYERS** WICHITA, KANSAS

VANILLA EXTRACT

For many shoppers, choosing between imitation and pure vanilla extract comes down to price—so imitation flavoring wins. But in a classic case of you-get-what-you-pay-for, the choice is really about flavor: The organic compounds that bless pure vanilla extract with a deep, alluring flavor give the real thing the edge. Our advice? Especially during such times as the holidays, when each dish needs to shine, pure vanilla extract is worth every penny.

MORE ONLINE

Learn cake frosting techniques at **tasteofhome.com/cakevideo**

For more cake recipes, **tasteofhome.com/cakes**

Deep & Dishy

Celebrate the season by the slice—the slice of pie, that is.

Sweet & Salty Truffle Pie

Homemade truffles—a little bit sweet and a little bit salty—will keep you coming back for more. Store extra truffles in the fridge.
—SHIRLEY WARREN THIENSVILLE, WISCONSIN

PREP: 1 HOUR 10 MIN. + CHILLING
BAKE: 13 MIN. • **YIELD:** 8 SERVINGS

1½ cups all-purpose flour
¾ tsp. salt
½ cup shortening
3 Tbsp. cold water
1½ tsp. white vinegar

TRUFFLES

2 cups dark chocolate chips, divided
⅓ cup heavy whipping cream
¼ cup crushed pretzels
1 Tbsp. shortening
2 tsp. coarse sugar
½ tsp. kosher salt

FILLING

1⅓ cups semisweet chocolate chips, divided
1¼ cups heavy whipping cream, divided
¼ cup sugar
2 egg yolks
¼ cup butter, softened
2 Tbsp. vanilla extract

TOPPING

1 cup heavy whipping cream
3 Tbsp. confectioners' sugar
½ tsp. vanilla extract
Broken pretzels, optional

1. In a bowl, combine flour and salt; cut in shortening until crumbly. Combine water and vinegar; gradually add to flour, tossing with a fork until dough forms a ball. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

2. Roll out pastry to fit a 9-in. pie plate. Transfer pastry to pie plate. Trim pastry to ½ in. beyond edge of plate; flute edges. Line pastry with a double thickness of heavy-duty foil. Fill with dried beans, uncooked rice or pie weights.

3. Bake at 450° for 8 minutes. Remove foil and weights; bake 5-7 minutes longer or until golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

4. For truffles, melt 1 cup dark chocolate chips in microwave, stir until smooth. Gradually stir in cream until blended. Stir in pretzels. Cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally. Refrigerate until firm. Shape into 24 1-in. balls.

5. In a microwave, melt shortening and remaining dark chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Combine coarse sugar and kosher salt. Dip truffles in chocolate mixture; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper; sprinkle with sugar mixture. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until set.

6. For filling, place ⅓ cup semisweet chocolate chips in a bowl. In a small saucepan, bring ¼ cup cream just to a boil. Pour over chocolate; whisk until smooth. Pour into crust. Refrigerate for 15 minutes or until set.

7. Meanwhile, in a small heavy saucepan, cook and stir sugar, remaining chocolate chips and remaining cream over medium heat until smooth. Whisk small amount into egg yolks. Return all to pan, stirring constantly. Cook and stir over low heat until mixture reaches 160°.

8. Pour into a large bowl; stir in butter and vanilla. Place bowl in an ice-water bath, stirring frequently until cooled. Remove bowl from ice water. Beat mixture until stiff peaks form. Spread into crust; chill completely.

9. For topping, in a bowl, beat cream until it starts to thicken. Add confectioners' sugar and vanilla; beat until soft peaks form. Spoon over filling; top with truffles and, if desired, broken pretzels. Serve with remaining truffles.

My grandmother's sweet potato casserole contains coconut and marshmallows. I thought it would be even better as a pie.
—**SIMONE BAZOS** BALTIMORE

PREP: 1 HOUR • **BAKE:** 1¼ HOURS + CHILLING • **YIELD:** 8 SERVINGS

1½ cups all-purpose flour
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. ground ginger
6 Tbsp. cold butter
2 Tbsp. shortening
3 to 4 Tbsp. cold water

FILLING

1 cup coconut milk
¾ cup packed brown sugar
¼ cup cream cheese, softened
2 cups mashed sweet potatoes
3 eggs, lightly beaten
2 tsp. lemon juice
1½ tsp. vanilla extract
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. ground cinnamon

MERINGUE

4 egg whites
¼ tsp. cream of tartar
½ cup sugar
1 jar (7 oz.) marshmallow creme
½ cup miniature marshmallows
¼ cup flaked coconut

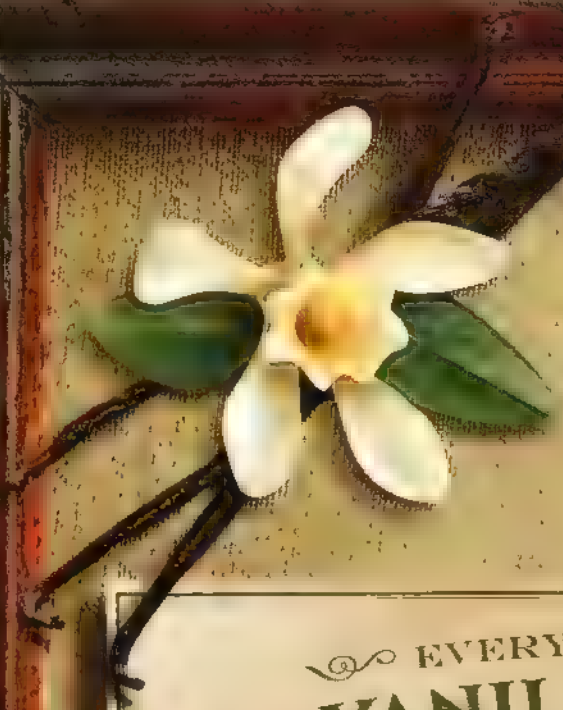
1. In a food processor, combine the flour, salt and ginger; cover and pulse to blend. Add butter and shortening; cover and pulse until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
2. While processing, gradually add water just until moist crumbs form. Shape into a disk; wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 30 minutes or until easy to handle.
3. Roll out pastry to fit a 9-in. deep-dish pie plate. Transfer the pastry to pie plate. Trim pastry to ½ in. beyond edge of plate; flute edges or decorate with pastry cutouts as desired. Line pastry with double thickness of heavy-duty foil. Fill with dried beans, uncooked rice or pie weights.
4. Bake at 425° for 8 minutes. Remove foil and weights; bake 5 minutes longer. Cool on a wire rack. Reduce oven temperature to 325°.
5. For filling, in a small saucepan, combine the coconut milk, brown sugar and cream cheese. Cook and stir until smooth. Transfer to a large bowl; cool 5 minutes. Whisk in sweet potatoes, eggs, lemon juice, vanilla, salt and cinnamon. Pour into crust.
6. Bake at 325° for 50-60 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cover the edges of the crust with foil during the last 15 minutes to prevent overbrowning if necessary.
7. For meringue, in a large bowl, beat egg whites and cream of tartar on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar, 1 Tbsp. at a time, on high until stiff glossy peaks form and sugar is dissolved. Place marshmallow creme in a separate large bowl; fold in a third of egg white mixture, then fold in remaining egg mixture. Spread meringue evenly over hot filling, sealing edges to crust. Sprinkle with marshmallows and coconut.
8. Bake 12-15 minutes longer or until top is golden brown. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours before serving. Store leftovers in the refrigerator.

Let pie weights cool before storing. Beans and rice may be reused for pie weights, but not for cooking.

taste TESTED

Brush unbaked pastry with lightly beaten egg to ensure that crust doesn't get soggy

MORE ONLINE
Watch our pie crust demo at **tasteofhome.com/pievideo**
Find more pie recipes at **tasteofhome.com/holidaypies**



EVERY MADAGASCAR

VANILLA FLOWER

MUST BE HAND POLLINATED ON THE VERY DAY IT BLOOMS.

Then things get really tricky.

It's not easy to produce the world's most flavorful vanilla. The beans are grown in the rainforests of Madagascar, picked by hand, then patiently cured for months to develop the full, mellow flavor.

Some vanillas use less flavorful beans or add corn syrup. We think that's a shame. After all, you don't compromise your recipes, why should we? Spice Islands 100% pure vanilla extract is just one of our exceptional flavors. Learn more at spiceislands.com.

SPICE ISLANDS®

{ WHAT THE WORLD TASTES LIKE® }

facebook.com/spiceislands

Say Cheesecake

Sure, it's made with cheese, but if its **exquisite texture** and flavor make you want to call it "**Blisscake**," go right ahead.

Strawberries and Champagne Cheesecake

I bake from scratch because I believe that love—and sweetened condensed milk—are the best ingredients
—**KATHRYN WORK**
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

PREP: 45 MIN. • **BAKE:** 55 MIN. + CHILLING
YIELD: 12 SERVINGS

- **1 cup Champagne or other sparkling wine**
- **2 cups chocolate graham cracker crumbs (about 14 whole crackers)**
- **2 cups sugar, divided**
- **½ cup butter, melted**
- **1 cup sliced fresh strawberries**
- **3 pkgs. (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened**
- **½ cup sweetened condensed milk**
- **2 Tbsp. cornstarch**
- **2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **2 egg yolks**
- **20 fresh strawberries, hulled**
- **⅓ cup milk chocolate chips**
- **1 tsp. shortening, divided**
- **⅓ cup white chocolate chips**
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **¼ cup confectioners' sugar**

1. Place Champagne in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil; cook until liquid is reduced to about ¼ cup, about 8 minutes. Cool slightly.
2. In a large bowl, combine the cracker crumbs, ½ cup sugar and butter. Press onto the bottom and 1½ in. up the sides of a greased 9-in. springform pan; set aside. Arrange sliced strawberries over bottom.
3. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and remaining sugar until smooth. Beat in sweetened condensed milk, cornstarch and reduced Champagne. Add eggs and egg yolks and beat on low speed just until combined. Pour mixture over strawberries. Place pan on a baking sheet.
4. Bake at 325° for 55-60 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight.
5. Remove sides of springform pan. For topping, wash strawberries and gently pat with paper towels until completely dry. Slice and arrange over cheesecake. In a microwave oven, melt milk chocolate chips and ½ tsp. shortening; stir until smooth. Drizzle over strawberries. Melt white chocolate chips and remaining shortening in microwave; stir until smooth. Drizzle over strawberries.
6. In a small bowl, beat cream until it begins to thicken. Add confectioners' sugar; beat until soft peaks form. Serve with cheesecake.

Making Perfect Cheesecake Every Time

- To avoid lumps, begin with softened cream cheese. To quickly soften 8 oz. cream cheese in the microwave, remove from package and place on a microwave-safe plate; microwave on 50% power for 30-60 seconds or until softened.
- To avoid overbeating—which may cause the cheesecake surface to crack—add lightly beaten eggs a t at one time.
- Slice cheesecake when well chilled, but for maximum flavor, allow the slices to stand at room temperature for 15 to 30 minutes before serving.
- For easier slicing, dip knife into a bowl of warm water before slicing each piece. This will allow the knife to slide right through the cheesecake. For perfect slices, clean the knife after each cut.
- To prevent cracks during cooling, loosen the cheesecake from the sides of the pan after baking.

MORE ONLINE
See how to make cheesecake at **tasteofhome.com/cheesecakevideo**
Find more cheesecake recipes at **tasteofhome.com/cheesecake**

Incredible Cookies

Watch heads turn—**and smiles brighten**—when you sweeten your holiday table with delightfully diminutive, charmingly crafted cookies like these.

These keep in a tightly sealed container in the freezer for three weeks, so don't eat them all at once

—SAMANTHA HARTZELL WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

PREP: 35 MIN. + FREEZING • **BAKE:** 10 MIN./BATCH • **YIELD:** 5 DOZEN

- **¾ cup butter, softened**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **⅓ cup 2% milk**
- **¾ tsp. peppermint extract**
- **½ tsp. vanilla extract**
- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **⅓ cup baking cocoa**
- **¼ cup cornstarch**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **1 lb. dark chocolate or white candy coating, melted**
- **Assorted sprinkles**

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in milk and extracts. Combine the flour, cocoa, cornstarch and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well.

Shape dough into two 1½-in. diameter rolls; wrap each roll in plastic wrap. Freeze for 2 hours or until dough is firm.

Unwrap and cut into ¼-in. slices. Place 1 in. apart onto parchment paper-lined baking sheets.

Bake at 375° for 10-12 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks and let cool completely.

Dip cookies in candy coating; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper. Decorate as desired with sprinkles to resemble wreaths; let stand until set.

These captivating, fluff-filled crisps are the perfect "little something sweet" that guests crave at the end of a filling meal
—**NATALIE BREMSON** PLANTATION, FLORIDA

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN./BATCH + COOLING • **YIELD:** 4 DOZEN

- **6 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed**
- **½ cup sugar**
- **3 Tbsp. light corn syrup**
- **⅔ cup all-purpose flour**
- **2 tsp. brandy**
- **1 tsp. ground ginger**

FILLING:

- **4 cups heavy whipping cream**
- **1¾ cups confectioners' sugar**
- **½ cup brandy**
- **Grated semisweet chocolate, optional**

1. In a small saucepan, combine the butter, sugar and corn syrup. Cook and stir over medium heat until butter is melted. Remove from the heat. Stir in the flour, brandy and ginger.
2. Drop by teaspoonfuls, three at a time, 3 in. apart onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 7-8 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 30–45 seconds. Working quickly, loosen each cookie and curl around a thick wooden spoon handle. (If cookies become too cool to shape, return to oven for 1 minute to soften.) Remove to wire rack to cool completely.
3. For filling, in a large bowl, beat cream until it begins to thicken. Add confectioners' sugar and brandy; beat until stiff peaks form. Just before serving, pipe cream mixture into cookies. Sprinkle ends with chocolate if desired. Refrigerate leftovers.

On a Roll With Brandy Snaps
While cookies are hot and pliable, gently roll each around a wooden spoon handle. Press to secure; allow cylinder to cool on handle before sliding off. Heat-sensitive hands? Rub fingers quickly over ice cubes before rolling hot cookies.

taste TESTED

We made this recipe using both inexpensive and high-quality brandies to compare the taste. Although the cookies looked identical, we found that the expensive brandies really did taste better—and had a more pronounced flavor—in the whipped cream filling.

Flaky Creme-Filled Cookies

The light, incredibly flaky base of these delightful sandwich cookies is an easy-to-make form of French puff pastry. Mix and match the flavorings, and you'll have cookies for every taste.

—**SUSAN FALK** EASTPOINTE, MICHIGAN

PREP: 50 MIN. + CHILLING
BAKE: 7 MIN./BATCH • **YIELD:** 6½ DOZEN

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **1 cup cold butter, cubed**
- **1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, cubed**
- **⅔ cup butter, softened**
- **⅔ cup marshmallow creme**
- **1⅓ cups confectioners' sugar**
- **Optional flavoring: 2 Tbsp. baking cocoa, ½ tsp. peppermint extract or ½ tsp. lemon extract**
- **1 drop red food coloring, optional**
- **Raspberry or blueberry preserves, optional**
- **Crushed peppermint candies, optional**
- **Confectioners' sugar**

1. In a large bowl, combine flour and salt. Cut in cold butter and cream cheese until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Shape into a disk; wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.
2. On a floured surface, roll dough to ⅛-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 1½-in. cookie cutter. Place 2 in. apart on parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 7-10 minutes or until light golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.
3. In a large bowl, beat softened butter and marshmallow creme until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar. Beat in flavoring of your choice, if desired. (Tint peppermint-flavored mixture with red food coloring, if desired.) Spread creme mixture on the bottoms of half of the cookies. Top with matching cookies or, if desired, spread preserves on the plain side of remaining cookies, then sandwich the matching cookies together. Roll sides of creme-filled cookies in peppermint candies, if desired. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.

taste TESTED

Fill these cookies with your heart's desire. We liked raspberry preserves with cocoa creme, blueberry preserves with lemon creme, and peppermint creme-filled cookies adorned with broken peppermint candies. But don't hesitate to experiment

In a large bowl, cream 1 cup **unsalted butter**, softened, and ½ cup **sugar** until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in 2 cups **all-purpose flour**. Press dough into a greased 9-in. square baking pan. Bake at 325° for 30-35 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack to cool completely. Cut into 9 squares; dust with **confectioners' sugar**.
—**PATTIE PRESCOTT** MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE FE

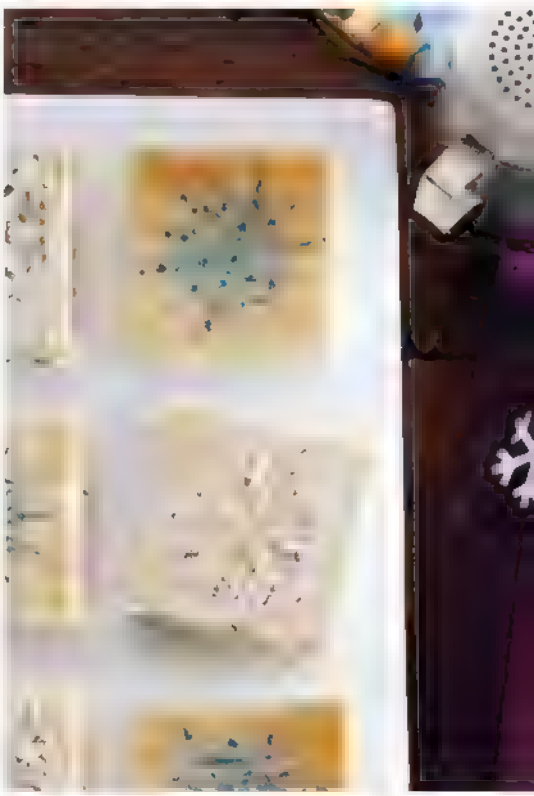
We used craft store paper stencils for our snowflakes. To make the white cookie, just tap powdered sugar over the stencil through a fine-mesh sieve. To make the blue snowflake, dip a small artist's brush in Luster Dust and paint in the stencil opening with a stippling motion.

Balanced beautifully in the sweet spot between cake and cookie, these sensational slices will be the centerpiece of your cookie tray.
—**SHERRY THOMPSON** SENECA, SOUTH CAROLINA

PREP: 45 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN./BATCH + CHILLING • **YIELD:** 12 DOZEN

- **⅔ cup blanched hazelnuts or macadamia nuts**
- **⅔ cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1 egg white**
- **4 eggs**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 cup butter, melted and cooled**
- **1½ tsp. rum extract**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **6 to 8 drops red food coloring**
- **6 to 8 drops green food coloring**
- **2 Tbsp. seedless strawberry jam**
- **2 Tbsp. apricot preserves**
- **1 cup (6 oz.) dark chocolate chips**
- **1 tsp. shortening**

1. Place hazelnuts in food processor; cover and process until ground. Add confectioners' sugar and egg white; cover and process until blended.
2. In a large bowl, beat eggs and sugar on high speed for 2-3 minutes or until thick and lemon-colored. Gradually beat in the hazelnut mixture, then the butter. Beat in rum extract. Combine flour and salt and add to egg mixture.
3. Divide batter into thirds. Stir red food coloring into one portion of batter; stir green food coloring into another portion. Leave remaining batter plain. Spread one portion into each of three well-greased 11 in. x 7 in. baking dishes.
4. Bake at 375° for 10-12 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean and edges begin to brown. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
5. Place red layer on a waxed paper-lined baking sheet; spread with strawberry jam. Top with plain layer, spread with apricot preserves. Add green layer; press down gently.
6. In a microwave, melt chocolate chips and shortening; stir until smooth. Spread half over green layer. Refrigerate for 20 minutes or until set. Turn over; spread remaining chocolate over red layer. Refrigerate for 20 minutes or until set.
7. With a sharp knife, trim edges. Cut rectangle lengthwise into fourths. Cut each portion into ¼-in. slices.



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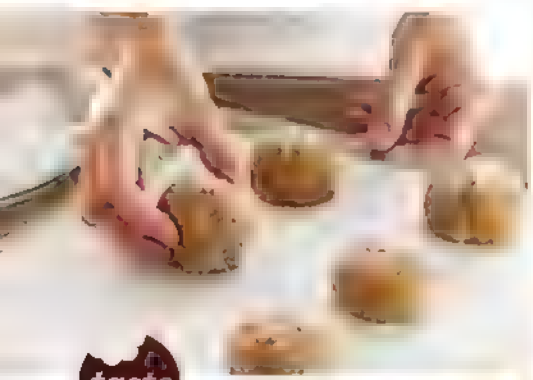
Learn cookie decorating techniques at **tasteofhome.com/cookiedecorating**

COOKIES FOR THE TROOPS

Sometimes, people we love are just too far away to smell the homey aroma of cookies emanating from our ovens—so we have to do our very best to bring that cozy smell to them. *Taste of Home* sent big batches of our Giant Molasses Cookies to troops serving overseas, making sure they arrived in good shape, still tasting fresh and smelling like home. According to Marine Lance Cpls. Luke Stauber of Evansville, Indiana, Francis Antoine of Washington, D.C., and Redrick Dean of Elyria, Ohio, the cookies were a hit, stirring up memories of being home for the holidays. For details on shipping cookies to our service members, see "Cooks Who Care," *page 80*.



taste TESTED

A little taste of home arrived for, *from left*, Lance Cpls. Dean, Stauber and Antoine, who are serving abroad.

[redacted]

My family always requests these soft and deliciously chewy cookies.
—**KRISTINE CHAYES** SMITHTOWN, NEW YORK

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 16 MIN./BATCH
YIELD: 2 DOZEN

- **1½ cups butter, softened**
- **2 cups sugar**
- **2 eggs**
- **½ cup molasses**
- **4½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **4 tsp. ground ginger**
- **2 tsp. baking soda**
- **1½ tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **1 tsp. ground cloves**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **¼ cup chopped pecans**
- **¾ cup coarse sugar**

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and molasses. Combine the flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Fold in pecans.
2. Shape into 2-in. balls and roll in coarse sugar. Place 2½-in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 16-18 minutes or until tops are cracked. Remove to wire racks to cool.

f you can t decide which entic ng topping to use, just make them a .
—**CHRISTINA PITTMAN** PARKVILLE, M SSOURI

PREP: 35 M N. + R S NG • **BAKE:** 10 M N
YIELD: 2 DOZEN

4½ to 5 cups all-purpose flour
¼ cup sugar
1 pkg. (¼ oz.) active dry yeast
1¼ tsp. salt
1 cup whole milk
½ cup water
2 tsp. butter
2 eggs
1 egg, lightly beaten
Toppings from page 62

1. In a large bowl, combine 2 cups flour, sugar, yeast and salt. In a small saucepan, heat the milk, water and butter to 120-130°. Add to dry ingredients; beat on medium speed for 3 minutes. Add 2 eggs; beat on high speed for 2 minutes. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough (dough will be sticky).
2. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.
3. Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide into 24 portions. Shape into balls. Divide the balls between two greased 13-in. x 9-in. baking pans.
4. Cover with a clean, lightweight towel and let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes. Brush with lightly beaten egg. Sprinkle rolls with toppings of your choice.
5. Bake at 375° for 10-15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks.

The Yeast of It

Roasted turkey may be the **star** of the holiday feast, but these homemade dinner rolls just might **steal the show.**

TOPPINGS FROM LEFT: PARM-GARLIC, ALMOND-HERB, EVERYTHING

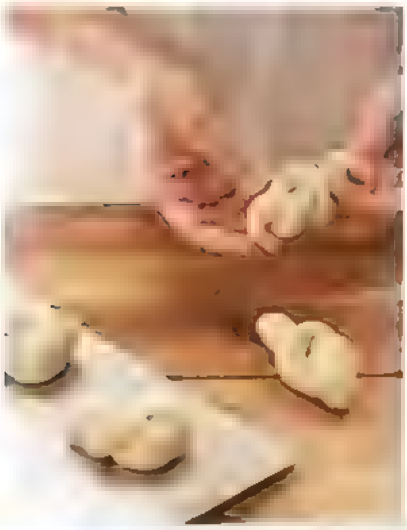
Toppings

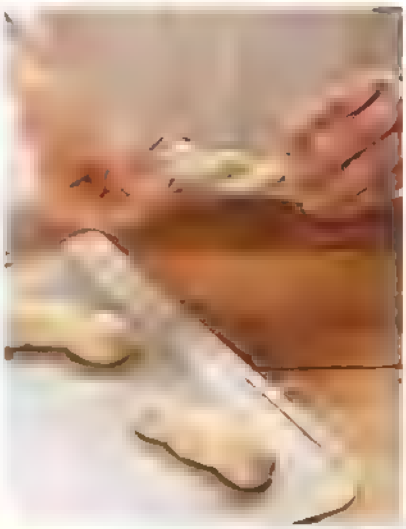
Add some festive flair to your home-baked rolls with these quick and easy crowd-pleasing toppers.

2 Tbsp. grated **Parmesan cheese** and ½ tsp. dried minced **garlic**

2 Tbsp. chopped sliced **almonds** and ½ tsp. each **kosher salt**, dried **basil** and dried **oregano**.

1 tsp. each **poppy seeds**, **kosher salt**, dried minced **garlic**, **sesame seeds** and dried minced **onion**.





Rosette Roll How-To

Make dough as directed; divide into 24 portions. Shape into balls; roll each into a 10-inch rope. Tie loose knot in the center of rope. Bring bottom end

Twist Roll How-To

Make dough as directed; divide into 24 portions. Shape into balls; roll each into 10-inch rope. Fold in half and twist two or three times, holding

Cloverleaf Roll How-To

Make dough as directed; divide into 24 portions. Divide each portion into three equal pieces; shape into balls. Place three balls in each greased muffin cup. Let

and bake as directed.

MORE ONLINE

tasteofhome.com/doughvideo

tasteofhome.com/yeastrolls

Quick Studies

Pantry ingredients, lickety-split mixing and 45 minutes of **heavenly smells** wafting through the kitchen **make quick bread a must** for the holidays.

Lemon and thyme go together like milk and cookies. Fresh thyme is best, but if you must use dried, reduce the amount to 1 tablespoon and crush it between your fingers before adding it to the batter.
—**CATHY TANG** REDMOND, WASHINGTON

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 40 MIN. + COOLING

- **½ cup butter, softened**
- **¾ cup sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **½ cup buttermilk**
- **½ cup sour cream**
- **1¾ cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 Tbsp. minced fresh thyme**
- **1 Tbsp. grated lemon peel**
- **½ tsp. baking soda**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **Confectioners' sugar**

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg. Combine buttermilk and sour cream. Combine the flour, thyme, lemon peel, baking soda and salt; add to the creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk mixture, beating well after each addition.

2. Transfer to a greased 8-in. x 4-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 40–50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack. Cool completely; sprinkle with confectioners' sugar. *Yield: 1 loaf (12 slices).*

For Lemon-Thyme Mini Loaves: Use three greased 5¾-in. x 3-in. x 2-in. loaf pans. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

For Lemon-Thyme Muffins (or Mini Muffins): Make batter as directed; fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups (or mini muffin cups) two-thirds full. Bake at 400° for 16-20 minutes (or for mini muffins, bake for 10–12 minutes) or until a toothpick comes out clean. If desired, top with your favorite frosting. *Yield: 1 dozen muffins (or 4 dozen mini muffins).*

Lemon-Thyme Icing: In a small bowl, combine ½ cup confectioners' sugar, ½ tsp. minced fresh thyme and 3 to 4 tsp. lemon juice, as needed, to achieve a drizzling consistency. *Yield: 2 Tbsp. icing*

Sizable gifts

This luscious bread lends itself to sharing. Make it effortlessly giftable by baking several loaves in inexpensive, decorative pans, like those we found from King Arthur Flour, *above* and on *page 65*. Once the loaves cool, slip them into plastic gift bags and tie with colorful ribbon, string or yarn.

MORE ONLINE
For more holiday baking ideas, go to **tasteofhome.com/holidaybaking**

BAKING holiday GUIDE

Tooling Around

Busy bakers, **give yourself a gift**! These terrific tools are perfect for sneaking into your own stocking.

A. Kitchen Shears

Whether you're a righty or a lefty, these Wusthof "Come-Apart" shears will chip through just about anything. **cutleryandmore.com.** $20

B. Pastry Bags & Tips

Get uber-creative when decorating cakes and cookies with Wilton's sturdy, lightweight bags and assortment of precise decorating tips. **wilton.com.** $7.10

C. Glass Mixing Bowls

Ranging from 1-quart to 4-quart capacities, the Smart Essentials Mixing Bowl Set from Pyrex won't stain or absorb odors. **walmart.com.** $20

D. Girolle

Fashion showstopping ruffles from blocks of chocolate or gorgeous shavings from hard cheeses. This tool is a splurge, but it guarantees a fabulous presentation. **auiswisscatalogue.com.** $95

E. Cooling Rack

This sleek, roomy Culinary Institute of America rack boasts a tightly woven grid and 204 square inches of space for quick cooling. **metrokitchen.com.** $36

F. Cookie Sheets

Heavyweight aluminum pans turn out evenly baked and perfectly browned goodies. Extra-tall 1-inch rims make them perfect for bars. **nordicware.com.** $12.95

G. Round Cake Pans

Nothing sticks to the surface of these Commercial Nonstick 8- and 9-inch cake pans. Even baking and warp-free construction make them even better. **chicagometallicbakeware.com** $17.18

H. Muffin Liners

Picture-perfect paper liners make delicious cupcakes and muffins as lovely to look at as they are to eat. **fancyflours.com.** $6

I. Mesh Strainers
Perfect for dusting cocoa, powdered sugar or glitter on pastries, or for straining mashed berries. **norpro.com.** *$12-18*

J. Springform Pan
This 9-inch glass-bottom springform pan with removable sides makes it a cinch to bake, cut and serve your dessert in style without having to transfer it to a plate **frieling.com.** *$40*

K. Super Spatulas
A must for frosting cakes, cookies, bars and tortes. Ateco's angled spatula reaches into deep pans while keeping fingers out of frosting **atecousa.com.** *$6.11*

L. *TOH Baking* Book
The latest version of our best-seller offers over 780 test kitchen approved recipes ranging from sweet to savory. **shoptasteofhome.com.** *$30*

M. Revolving Stand
Cake decorating is a breeze with Ateco's cast-iron and aluminum stand. Spin cakes 360 degrees as you frost **atecousa.com.** *$67*

N. Pizza Cutter
With two interchangeable blades—one stainless and one nonstick-safe polycarbonate—the Dual Blade Pizza Cutter is a cut above. **kingarthurflour.com.** *$15*

O. Rolling Pin
Joseph Joseph's Adjustable Rolling Pin with 3 sets of removable disks lets you roll out pastry to different thicknesses without any guesswork **aplusrstore.com.** *$20*

P. Giftable Pans
Bake, cool and deliver homemade loaves in the same decorative paper-lined wooden pans ■ **kingarthurflour.com.** *$15 for 6*

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contest

Thanksgiving, *the Sequel*

Turkey sandwiches towering with stuffing and gravy, pumpkin-pie breakfasts, and mashed potatoes overtaking the fridge: These are **the benefits of a bountiful Thanksgiving**. Now turn the page for 12 ways to revolutionize leftovers and **keep the fresh, flavorful meals coming for days**.

Reap the Benefits
There's more to Turkey Day than a full belly. With the right ingredients, the meal can deliver a bounty of nutrients, *page 44*.

Well Dressed
Find fantastic dressing recipes from around the country with help from traveling food writers Jane and Michael Stern, *page 83*.

Serve a Beautiful Bird
Pair a second-to-none turkey recipe with expert carving tips and you're guaranteed gobbler success, *page 22*.

win!

YOU COULD BE NEXT! TURN THE PAGE TO ENTER OUR NEXT RECIPE CONTEST.

SHARE THE BOUNTY

ENTER OUR **POTLUCK SIDES** CONTEST *& WIN*

$500

DO YOUR SIDES STEAL THE SHOW? If your dishes disappear first from the potluck table, those recipes must be winners. Now's your chance to cash in on those super sides. We're looking for the most delicious ways to **Share the Bounty**, in the form of seasonally influenced side dishes that stand out at formal parties and laid back celebrations.

Enter the potluck dish you're always asked to bring –that special something that guarantees you'll leave with an empty pan and a dozen recipe requests. It could win you **$500** and a special appearance in *Taste of Home*.

SEND US YOUR BEST FALL-INSPIRED POTLUCK SIDE IN THESE CATEGORIES:

- **Pasta** Use your noodle to come up with something brilliant for pasta of any size, shape or makeup. Get inspired with creamy and cheesy bakes, well-flavored stir-fries and tosses, and brothy combinations.
- **Fall Vegetables** Whether they're pulled from the soil or picked from the plant, let autumn veggies shine. Highlight beets, Brussels sprouts, squashes, potatoes and more in traditional or unexpected ways, including sautes, mashes, purees and gratins.
- **Grains and Rice** From oats, barley and quinoa to brown, wild and quick-cooking rice—or any combination of the above—show off these fall staples. Add them to savory salads, soups and casseroles or go the dessert route and create sweet snack bars, cookies and desserts.

ENTRY DEADLINE IS DEC. 30, 2011.
We'll announce winners in a future issue.

ENTER TODAY AT **tasteofhome.com/recipecontests.**

Meet This Issue's *Grand Prize* Winner

Busy mom Relina Shirley of Reno, Nevada, transforms leftover turkey and stuffing into **a savory Creole-flavored sensation.**

TOH: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN MAKING YOUR TURKEY SOUP WITH STUFFING DUMPLINGS?
RELINA: After hosting Thanksgiving last year, I had more leftovers than I knew what to do with. After a day or two of enjoying them all, I still had loads of stuffing and turkey. At that point, we really needed something that didn't taste like Thanksgiving but was built around elements of the meal. This recipe was born from that.

TOH: WHAT'S YOUR COOKING PHILOSOPHY?
RELINA: I was fortunate to grow up in a family of amazing cooks, though I didn't find my love of cooking until after getting married. I was taught to try recipe after recipe and learned the ropes by trial and error. It's the best way to discover what flavors work well together and how to troubleshoot in the kitchen. With a family of four and a third baby on the way, my current specialty is anything I can make in an hour that doesn't use every dish in the house.

TOH: TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY.
RELINA: My family is a great support and almost always enjoys whatever I make. My from scratch creations seem to be the biggest hits with them. My husband, Chuck, and I work from home, which allows us more time with our boys, Charlie, 5½, and Topher, 4, and a little more cooking flexibility. We're looking forward to using the prize money to cross a few items off our kitchen equipment wish list.

RELINA'S TIP: If you don't have leftover stuffing for my **Stuffing Dumpling Soup**, use regular dumplings instead. Even pasta will work. The Creole seasoning is a dominant flavor, so this recipe can handle a variety of leftovers. ■

GRAND PRIZE

Stuffing Dumpling Soup

RELINA SHIRLEY RENO, NEVADA

I've always loved turkey, dumplings and stuffing, so I combined them and added a punch of Creole flavor. My family loves it, even my little ones. It's got some kick, but a dollop of sour cream mellows that out.

FIRST PLACE

Turkey Puffs with Cranberry Cabernet Sauce

SUZANNE CLARK PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Caramelized onions and mushrooms revitalize leftover turkey, while sweet and savory cranberry sauce balances the rich pastry and cream cheese. This is a quick and easy way to end a day of Black Friday shopping!

SECOND PLACE

Double Layered Souffle

SHARON AMIDON GUTHRIE, OKLAHOMA

This simple souffle bursts with flavor. The crispy topping of cheese hides a creamy layer of turkey underneath. If I don't have turkey on hand, I use chicken instead.

THIRD PLACE

Sweet Potato & Caramelized Onion Shells

ROBIN HAAS CRANSTON, RHODE ISLAND

Gorgonzola cheese and sweet potatoes add a fun and flavorful twist. Delicious with a sprinkle of Parmesan, the shells can be topped with leftover gravy, too.

Turkey Puffs with Cranberry Cabernet Sauce

PREP: 40 MIN. • **BAKE:** 20 MIN. • **YIELD:** 4 SERVINGS

- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 cup dried wild mushrooms
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 tsp. minced fresh tarragon or ¼ tsp. dried tarragon
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 1 pkg. (17.3 oz.) frozen puff pastry, thawed
- 8 oz. thinly sliced cooked turkey
- ½ cup spreadable chive and onion cream cheese
- 1 egg, beaten

SAUCE:

- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 cup dry red wine or additional chicken broth
- ½ cup balsamic vinegar
- ¾ cup jellied cranberry sauce

1. In a saucepan, combine broth and mushrooms; bring to a boil. Remove from heat; let stand for 15-20 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove mushrooms; coarsely chop. Strain remaining broth through a fine mesh strainer.

2. In a large skillet, saute onion in butter until softened. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Add the tarragon, salt, pepper, chopped mushrooms and broth. Bring to a boil; cook over medium heat until liquid is evaporated.

3. On a floured surface, unfold puff pastry. Roll each sheet into a 12-in. x 10-in. rectangle; cut each into 2 pieces. Transfer to a greased baking sheet. Spoon mushroom mixture onto each pastry; top with turkey and cream cheese.

4. Brush pastry edges with water. Bring long sides over filling, pinching to seal. Turn pastries seam side down. Cut slits in pastry. Brush tops with egg. Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown.

5. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine the broth, wine and vinegar. Bring to a boil; cook until liquid is reduced by half. Stir in cranberry sauce until melted. Serve with pastries.

Stuffing Dumpling Soup

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 25 MIN. • **YIELD:** 5 SERVINGS

- 1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1½ cups chopped fresh carrots
- 2 tsp. Creole seasoning
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups cooked stuffing
- 2 cups cubed cooked turkey
- 1½ cups cut fresh green beans

1. In a Dutch oven, saute mushrooms and onion in oil until tender. Add garlic; cook 1 minute longer. Add the broth, carrots and Creole seasoning. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered for 5-8 minutes or until the carrots are tender.

2. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, whisk eggs and flour until smooth. Crumble stuffing over mixture; mix well. If necessary, add water, 1 tsp. a time, until mixture holds its shape.

3. Add the turkey and green beans; return to a boil. Drop stuffing mixture by heaping tablespoonfuls onto simmering soup. Cover and simmer for 8-10 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in a dumpling comes out clean (do not lift the cover while simmering).

Editor's Note: *The following spices may be substituted for 1 tsp. Creole seasoning: ¼ tsp. each salt, garlic powder and paprika; and a pinch each of dried thyme, ground cumin and cayenne pepper.*

Sweet Potato & Caramelized Onion Shells

PREP: 40 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN. • **YIELD:** 7 SERVINGS

- 2 large onions, chopped
- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 21 uncooked jumbo pasta shells
- ¼ cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 Tbsp. sherry or apple cider
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 1½ cups mashed sweet potatoes
- 1½ cups (6 oz.) crumbled Gorgonzola cheese
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 Tbsp. minced fresh parsley
- 1 cup turkey gravy, warmed, optional

1. In a large skillet, saute onions in butter until softened. Add garlic powder and salt. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, for 25-30 minutes or until deep golden brown.

2. Meanwhile, cook the pasta shells according to package directions. Drain pasta; set aside.

3. Stir the broth, sherry, thyme and pepper into onions. Bring to a boil; cook until liquid is almost evaporated. Remove from the heat. Stir in sweet potatoes and Gorgonzola cheese.

4. Spoon into shells, place in a greased 11-in. x 7-in. baking dish. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Cover and bake at 375° for 10-15 minutes or until heated through. Sprinkle with parsley. Serve with gravy if desired.

Double Layered Souffle

PREP: 40 MIN. • **BAKE:** 1¼ HOURS • **YIELD:** 8 SERVINGS

- 6 eggs
- ¼ cup butter, cubed
- 1 cup chopped fresh mushrooms
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 cups 2% milk
- 3 cups cubed cooked turkey breast

SOUFFLE LAYER:

- ⅓ cup butter, cubed
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1½ cups 2% milk
- 1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
- 1½ cups (6 oz.) shredded Swiss cheese

1. Separate eggs; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Grease a 2½-qt. souffle dish; sprinkle with flour.

2. Meanwhile, melt butter in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms; saute until tender. Stir in flour and salt until blended; gradually whisk in milk. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; cook and stir for 2-3 minutes or until thickened. Add turkey; heat through. Transfer to prepared dish.

3. For souffle layer, melt butter in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add shallot, saute until tender. Stir in flour and salt; gradually whisk in milk. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Cook and stir for 2-3 minutes or until thick. Transfer to a bowl, stir in spinach and cheese.

4. Stir a small amount of hot spinach mixture into yolks; return all to bowl, stirring constantly. Cool slightly.

5. In a bowl, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. With a spatula, stir a fourth of the egg whites into spinach mixture until no white streaks remain. Fold in remaining egg whites. Pour over turkey.

6. Bake at 325° for 1¼ to 1½ hours or until the top is puffed and center appears set. Serve immediately.

Four-Cheese Turkey Pasta Bake

MARY COKENOUR MONTICELLO, UTAH

Leftover turkey combines with penne and cheeses to make a classic comfort food. The pasta bake works with chicken, shrimp or beef, too.

Turkey Mushroom Sandwich B

ANGELA LEINENBACH MECHANICSVILLE, VIRGINIA

My grandmother was an amazing cook who brought new life to leftovers. I've tried to do the same here in these creamy, mushroom-packed sandwiches.

Stuffing Crust Turkey Potpie

TAMARA FURDA NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

Here's a wonderful, stick-to-the-ribs dish that slices ve[illegible]me filling is thicker than th[illegible] of traditional pot[illegible] Prebaking the crust makes it [illegible]ven

Spicy Mustard Turkey Pizza

KERI COTTON LAKEVILLE, MINNESOTA

A unique take on traditional pizza, this is an instant family favorite thanks to the tangy sauce and crisp crust. If you're not a fan of Swiss cheese, substitute provolone or mozzarella.

Turkey Mushroom Sandwich Bowls

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN. • **YIELD:** 4 SERVINGS

- **4 French rolls**
- **¼ cup butter, melted**
- **1½ cups sliced fresh mushrooms**
- **1 medium onion, thinly sliced**
- **2 Tbsp. canola oil**
- **½ cup dry vermouth or chicken broth**
- **2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **¼ tsp. pepper**
- **1¼ cups heavy whipping cream**
- **4 cups cubed cooked turkey**
- **Minced fresh chives**

1. Cut a ½-in. slice off the top of each roll; set aside tops. Hollow out centers, leaving ¼-in. shells (discard removed bread or save for another use). Brush tops and inside of rolls with butter; place on a baking sheet. Bake at 325° for 10-15 minutes or until lightly browned.

2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, saute mushrooms and onion in oil until tender. Add vermouth, stirring to loosen browned bits from pan. Bring to a boil; cook until liquid is almost evaporated. Combine the flour, salt, pepper and cream; stir until smooth. Stir into skillet; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook and stir for 1-2 minutes or until sauce is thickened. Stir in turkey; heat through. Spoon into hollowed rolls; garnish with chives. Replace tops.

Four-Cheese Turkey Pasta Bake

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 35 MIN. • **YIELD:** 6 SERVINGS

- **8 oz. uncooked penne**
- **1 small onion, chopped**
- **2 Tbsp. butter**
- **4 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 can (10¾ oz.) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted**
- **1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened and cubed**
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1 cup 2% milk**
- **1 jar (4½ oz.) sliced mushrooms, drained**
- **½ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
- **½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese**
- **½ cup shredded Swiss cheese**
- **¼ tsp. ground nutmeg**
- **¼ tsp. coarsely ground pepper**
- **2 cups cubed cooked turkey breast**

TOPPING:

- **½ cup seasoned bread crumbs**
- **3 Tbsp. butter, melted**

1. Cook penne according to package directions. Drain; set aside.

2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, saute the onion in butter until tender. Add garlic; cook 2 minutes longer. Add the soup, cream cheese, cream and milk; cook and stir just until cream cheese is melted. Stir in the mushrooms, cheeses and spices; cook just until cheeses are melted. Add turkey and penne; heat through.

3. Transfer to a greased 2½-qt. baking dish. In a small bowl, combine topping ingredients; sprinkle over pasta mixture. Cover and bake at 350° for 25 minutes. Uncover; bake 10-15 minutes longer or until bubbly and golden brown.

Spicy Mustard Turkey Pizza

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN. • **YIELD:** 6 SLICES

- **1 prebaked 12-in. thin pizza crust**
- **3 Tbsp. reduced-fat mayonnaise**
- **3 Tbsp. spicy brown mustard**
- **3 Tbsp. honey**
- **½ tsp. garlic powder**
- **2 cups cubed cooked turkey**
- **1 cup chopped fresh mushrooms**
- **5 cooked bacon strips, chopped**
- **1 cup (4 oz.) shredded Swiss cheese**

1. Place crust on an ungreased 12-in. pizza pan. In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, mustard, honey and garlic powder. Add turkey; toss to coat. Spread over crust.

2. Top with mushrooms, bacon and Swiss cheese. Bake at 450° for 9-11 minutes or until cheese is melted.

Stuffing Crust Turkey Potpie

PREP: 35 MIN. • **BAKE:** 20 MIN. • **YIELD:** 6 SERVINGS

- **2 cups cooked cornbread stuffing**
- **3 to 4 Tbsp. chicken broth**
- **¼ cup cream cheese, softened**
- **½ cup turkey gravy**
- **2 cups cubed cooked turkey**
- **1 cup frozen broccoli florets, thawed**
- **½ cup shredded Swiss cheese**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **¼ tsp. pepper**
- **2 cups mashed potatoes**
- **¼ cup half-and-half cream**
- **2 Tbsp. butter, melted**
- **½ cup French-fried onions, optional**

1. In a small bowl, combine the stuffing and enough broth to reach desired moistness; press onto the bottom and up the sides of a greased 9-in. deep-dish pie plate. Bake at 350° for 10-15 minutes or until crust is lightly browned.

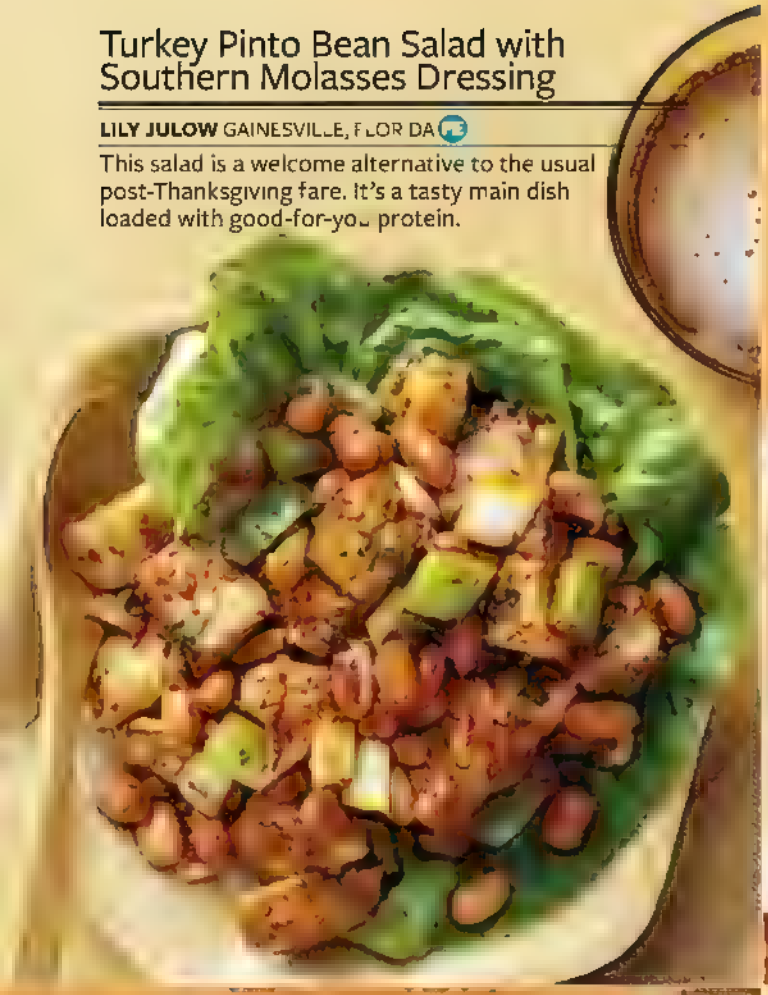
2. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and gravy until smooth. Stir in the turkey, broccoli, Swiss cheese, salt and pepper. Spoon over crust.

3. In a small bowl, combine potatoes and cream; spread over turkey mixture. Drizzle with butter; sprinkle with onions if desired. Bake 20-25 minutes or until heated through and lightly browned.

Turkey Pinto Bean Salad with Southern Molasses Dressing

LILY JULOW GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

This salad is a welcome alternative to the usual post-Thanksgiving fare. It's a tasty main dish loaded with good-for-you protein.



Turkey Sandwich with Pineapple Salsa

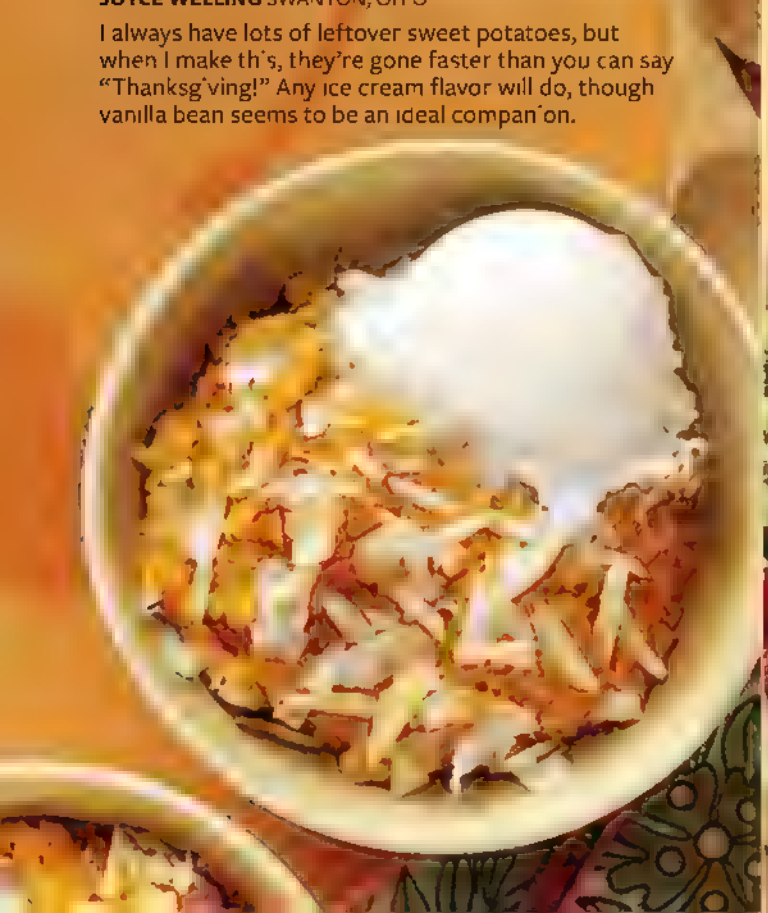
ANDREA BOYER LENORE, IDAHO

This is the first recipe I created on my own. The pineapple brightens the flavor of the turkey mixture. Feel free to use rolls in place of the French bread.

Baked Sweet Potato Pudding

JOYCE WELLING SWANTON, OHIO

I always have lots of leftover sweet potatoes, but when I make this, they're gone faster than you can say "Thanksgiving!" Any ice cream flavor will do, though vanilla bean seems to be an ideal companion.



Turkey Spinach Salad with Cran-Raspberry Dressing

ELIZABETH KING DULUTH, MINNESOTA

A colorful way to keep celebrating, this dish works as an entree or a side salad. If you don't want to use macadamia nuts, try fried wonton strips.

Turkey Sandwich with Pineapple Salsa

PREP: 25 M N. • **BAKE:** 15 MIN. • **YIELD:** 6 SERVINGS

- 1¼ cups finely chopped fresh pineapple
- 2 roma tomatoes, finely chopped
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- ⅓ cup minced fresh cilantro
- 1 loaf (1 lb.) French bread
- 1 lb. thinly sliced cooked turkey
- 6 slices part-skim mozzarella cheese

AIOLI

- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp. pepper

1. In a small bowl, combine the pineapple, tomatoes, onion and cilantro; set aside.
2. Cut bread in half horizontally; place cut sides up on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 4–5 minutes or until toasted; remove top half from pan. Layer bottom half with turkey and cheese. Bake 10–13 minutes longer or until turkey is heated through and cheese is melted.
3. Meanwhile, combine the aioli ingredients in a small bowl. Carefully spread over cheese; top with salsa. Replace bread top; cut into six slices.

Turkey Pinto Bean Salad with Southern Molasses Dressing

PREP: 35 M N. + CHILLING • **YIELD:** 6 SERV NGS

- ½ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and halved
- ½ cup molasses
- 3 Tbsp. cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. prepared mustard
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. coarsely ground pepper

SALAD

- 3 cups cubed cooked turkey breast
- 2 cans (15 oz. each) pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 medium green pepper, diced
- 2 celery ribs, diced
- 1 cup chopped sweet onion
- ¼ cup minced fresh parsley

1. Drain tomatoes, reserving 2 Tbsp. oil. Place garlic and tomatoes in a food processor; cover and process until chopped. Add the molasses, vinegar, mustard, salt, pepper and reserved oil. Cover and process until smooth.
2. In a large bowl, combine the turkey, beans, green pepper, celery, onion and parsley. Add dressing and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.

Turkey Spinach Salad with Cran-Raspberry Dressing

PREP/TOTAL TIME: 30 MIN. • **YIELD:** 6 SERVINGS (⅔ CUP DRESS NG)

- ½ cup whole-berry cranberry sauce
- 2 Tbsp. raspberry vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. seedless raspberry jam
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ⅓ cup olive oil

SALAD

- 8 cups fresh spinach, torn
- 3 medium kiwifruit, peeled and sliced, divided
- 1 cup fresh raspberries, divided
- ½ cup whole-berry cranberry sauce
- 2 cups diced cooked turkey breast
- ¾ cup coarsely chopped macadamia nuts, toasted

1. In a blender, combine the cranberry sauce, vinegar, jam and salt. Cover and process until smooth. While processing, gradually add oil in a steady stream. Refrigerate until chilled.
2. To serve, combine the spinach, half of the kiwi, ½ cup raspberries and cranberry sauce in a large bowl. Add ½ cup dressing; toss to coat. Transfer to a serving platter. Arrange the turkey, macadamia nuts and remaining fruit over top; drizzle with remaining dressing. Serve immediately.

Baked Sweet Potato Pudding

PREP: 25 M N. • **BAKE:** 50 MIN. • **YIELD:** 8 SERVINGS

- 4 cups mashed sweet potatoes
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- 3 eggs, separated
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. grated lemon peel
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- 1 cup flaked coconut, divided
- ⅓ cup packed brown sugar
- ⅓ cup slivered almonds
- Vanilla ice cream, optional

1. In a large bowl, beat the potatoes, cream, egg yolks, lemon juice, lemon peel and spices until smooth. Fold in ⅔ cup coconut.
2. In a large bowl with clean beaters, beat egg whites on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in brown sugar, 1 Tbsp. at a time, on high until stiff glossy peaks form and sugar is dissolved.
3. With a spatula, stir a fourth of the egg whites into sweet potato mixture until no white streaks remain. Fold in remaining egg whites until combined.
4. Transfer to a greased 11-in. x 7-in. baking dish. Sprinkle with almonds and the remaining coconut. Bake at 325° for 50–55 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Serve warm, with ice cream if desired.

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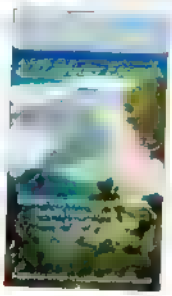

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Lucky Leaf Cherry Bliss Brownies

Prep 25 min
Cook 50-60 min
Serves 24

PREHEAT OVEN TO 350°F.

- 1 19.5-oz package brownie mix
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- ¼ cup water
- 1 8-oz softened cream cheese
- 5 Tbsp butter, softened
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon vanilla
- 1 21-oz can LUCKY LEAF® Regular or Premium Cherry Pie Filling

In a large bowl prepare brownie mix according to package directions, using oil, eggs, and water. Spread batter in a 9x13" greased pan. Set aside.

Beat cream cheese and butter in large bowl until fluffy. Add sugar. Beat in additional 2 eggs, flour, and vanilla. Drop spoonfuls of the mixture over brownie batter in pan. Use a knife to gently cut through batters to create a marble pattern.

Spoon LUCKY LEAF Cherry Pie Filling over top. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Cool completely before serving.

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CELEBRATING the PEOPLE around the *Taste of Home* table

Taming the Feast

A **newbie Thanksgiving host** learns this meal is not for the faint of heart.

BY **BERIT THORKELSON** | ILLUSTRATION BY **JULIETTE BORDA**

The stack of paper plates on the kitchen island got us thinking: Maybe my stepmom, Nancy, could be persuaded to give up hosting the annual Thanksgiving dinner.

Clint and I were newlyweds, itching to establish our own family traditions. Plus, we love cooking together. Clearly we were destined to host the holiday. Was the first Thanksgiving served on disposable dishware a sign that Nancy was ready to pass the torch? We hinted, and she jumped. "It's all yours."

Thrilled, we set to work investing in necessities for the impending feast: hunting down the right size farmhouse table, trolling thrift stores for serving spoons, scoring a giant fancy tablecloth and a couple of dozen chairs off Craigslist.

Then, on Turkey Day Eve, Clint and I dug into the cleaning and prep work, tasks we quickly realized should have been started eons earlier. What were we thinking? Why did we volunteer to host 20 people for our first try at slow roasting a 20-pound turkey with all the from-scratch fixings?

We were up into the wee hours scrubbing, chopping and mixing. After a brief nap, it was on to peeling, stuffing and basting. Need I mention that dinner was far from ready when everyone arrived on our doorstep in a flurry of holiday cheer? Nancy seemed especially chipper. Suddenly, those paper plates made perfect sense.

Eventually, the entire meal made it to the table—beautifully set, I might add—and for that everyone seemed truly thankful. Most of all, me.

Clint and I have hosted Thanksgiving dinner for three years now and counting. Honestly? Not one of them has been perfect, though they do seem to get a little better each year. At the last, for example, our infant son tried his first potato—hand-mashed, of course. It's one of the Thanksgiving traditions at our place. ■

SHARE YOUR STORY Do you have a heartwarming kitchen memory or a funny tale of family mealtimes? We'd love to hear it. Send it to **editors@tasteofhome.com**

Berit Thorkelson is a freelance writer whose work appears in national magazines and on her blog at loveanddiapers.com. Next Thanksgiving, she plans to introduce the deliciousness of hand-mashed potatoes to her daughter, who is due to arrive in January.

Fowl Play

Little pilgrims will love whipping up their own sweet, crispy creations to share with their friends and family.

Tom Turkeys

With a little prep work by Mom or Dad, these make a great before- or after-dinner craft project for kids to enjoy while adults at the feast converse

—***TASTE OF HOME* TEST KITCHEN**
GREENDALE, WISCONSIN

PREP: 30 MIN. ▪ **COOK:** 5 MIN. + COOLING
YIELD: 26 TURKEYS

- **1 pkg. (12 oz.) semisweet chocolate chips**
- **1 pkg. (11 oz.) candy corn**
- **52 fudge-striped cookies**
- **¼ cup butter, cubed**
- **4 cups miniature marshmallows**
- **6 cups crisp rice cereal**
- **52 white confetti sprinkles**

1. In a microwave, melt chocolate chips; stir until smooth. For tails, use a dab of chocolate to attach five candy corns in a fan shape to the chocolate side of half of the cookies; refrigerate until set

2. In a large saucepan, melt butter. Add marshmallows; stir over low heat until melted. Stir in cereal. Cool for 10 minutes. With buttered hands, form cereal mixture into 1½ in. balls.

3. Remelt chocolate if necessary. Using chocolate, attach the cereal balls to the chocolate side of the remaining cookies. Position tails perpendicular to the base cookies; attach with chocolate. Refrigerate until set.

4. For feet, cut off white tips from 52 candy corns; discard tips. Attach feet to base cookies with chocolate. Attach one candy corn to each cereal ball for heads.

5. With a toothpick dipped in chocolate, attach two confetti sprinkles to each head. Using chocolate, dot each sprinkle to make pupils. Let stand until set. Store in an airtight container. ■

Or eat them up!

Amelia Tryon, age 3

Presley Flora, age 5

Sophia Zangrilli, age 2

GOT A KID WHO COOKS?
We're looking for kid-friendly recipes you make together, from healthy snacks to dinner and dessert. Send them to **tasteofhome.com/submit**.

Gobble this up
This little turkey is as much fun to make as it is to eat.

MORE ONLINE
For this issue's coloring book page go to **tasteofhome.com/kids**

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The Sweets Behind the Strong

Within the humble **care package** lies something every military man and woman craves: **a taste of home.** BY RENEE SCHETTLER ROSSI

Idea Power Christine Hofmann-Bourque of Boston has made it her mission to help people support loved ones separated from family while serving abroad.

It was 1967, and Betty Hofmann, newly wed and newly pregnant with her daughter, found herself assembling care packages to send to her husband, James, during his yearlong deployment to Vietnam. Betty sent letters every day, an occasional jar of peanut butter to help make MREs (prepackaged military meals) more palatable, and, just once, chocolate. "I thought it would be nice to make him some fudge," she says. "I carefully wrapped up individual pieces in aluminum foil, and I thought it would ship really well.

"Except it was the middle of summer, and it was probably 120 degrees in Vietnam. And the mail was much slower then. I think everything went by boat. It probably took a month to get there," she laughs. "When he opened the box, it was just this mess of melted chocolate ooze and foil."

So maybe it was predestined that her daughter, Christine Hofmann-Bourque, would grow up to help other people wanting to send lovely little somethings to their homesick loved ones overseas. To that end, Christine founded **thestrengthbehindthestrong.com**, a website dedicated to all manner of "imaginative and practical ideas for staying connected with and supporting our troops," says Christine. "It's for everyone who's ever mailed a care package, thrown a welcome-home-from-deployment party, or thanked a soldier in an airport for his or her service."

FAMILY ROOTS

The site is exceptionally useful for those who want to send the sweet, caloric sort of support. The Dear Abby of military care packages, Christine passes along hard-earned and savvy how-to's. With three brothers, a sister-in-law and a cousin on active duty, Christine says, there have always been many care packages in her life. But it wasn't until her husband, a social worker, decided to join the Army after 9/11 that she really fine-tuned her baking, packing and shipping skills.

Even after he returned home, she found it difficult to stop sending treats. "Once you understand how much it means to the soldiers, you start to package up more for others who may not have been receiving them," Christine explains. "There's still something very special about getting a letter or a package in the mail, as opposed to just getting an email on the computer. They know that someone took the time and effort to think about and wrap up and haul something to the post office. Which, of course, is the point: to show that you care. And they're thinking, *Wow, someone took the time to send me something.*" ■

Super Cookie We got involved, too! We baked hundreds of *TOH* Giant Molasses Cookies to ship overseas. See "Cookies for the Troops," *page 60*, for story and recipe. **Tip:** We tucked candy and gum between the cookies for edible cushioning.

Peanut Butter Kiss Cookies

Baking cookies to share doesn't get much easier than this. Stir together four ingredients. Bake. Top with a Kiss.
—**DEE DAVIS** SUN CITY, ARIZONA

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN. + COOLING
YIELD: 2 DOZEN

- **1 cup peanut butter**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **24 Hershey Kisses**

1. In a large bowl, cream peanut butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the egg and vanilla; beat until ingredients are blended.
2. Roll into 1¼-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 10–12 minutes or until tops are slightly cracked.
3. Immediately press one chocolate Kiss into the center of each cookie. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.

Editor's Note: *Don't use reduced fat peanut butter for this recipe. The higher fat of regular peanut butter helps keep the cookies from cracking.*

MORE ONLINE
For ideas and packing tips from Christine Hofmann-Bourque, watch our video at **cookswhocare.com**.

Flip Top Peanut Butter Kiss Cookies are so much easier to pack if the Hershey's Kiss on top is simply flipped upside down, a clever trick Christine learned from her mother.

BE AN ANGEL

Here are some ways to say thank you to those men and women who are serving our country.

- Soldiers' Angels pairs up military personnel with caring civilians. **soldiersangels.org**
- Operation Santa by Citizen SAM seeks volunteers to make holidaystockings for soldiers. **citizensam.org**
- Cup of Joe for a Joe is a great way to send gift certificates redeemable for coffee at overseas Green Beans locations **greenbeanscoffee.com**

Packing 101

Can't decide what to send? The best thing you can do is simply ask people what they'd like. Then use this guide to send care packages that loved ones want.

- **Free Boxes** The U.S. Postal Service provides free military kits that include boxes, tape, address labels and customs forms. Call 800-610-8734. Choose your language of choice, then select the first option and request the Military Care Kit. Allow 7–10 days for delivery. Or pick up a box or two directly from the post office.
- **Ounces Count** It's tempting to pack a bazillion things in a box, but it gets heavy quickly. If you ask, post office employees will help. If you can fit what you're sending into a priority flat-rate box, that's usually the best option.
- **Airtight** Pack cookies or brownies among large resealable plastic bags, which will keep out air and dust much better than wrapping them individually in plastic wrap. Squeeze as much air out of the bag as possible. (If you have a vacuum sealer, use it.) Include several small resealable bags so recipients can slip a sweet in a uniform pocket or share with some buddies.
- **Best for Shipping** The most stable treats to send year-round include drop cookies, brownies, Chex mix and purchased, shelf-stable baked goods. It's cool enough even in the desert for chocolate chip cookies to survive without melting.
- **Bit of Joy** Tuck an inexpensive plastic holiday serving dish or two in the box. At just $3 or $4 each, they add a festive touch to often grim surroundings.
- **Double-Duty Packing** For added cushioning, use newspapers, magazines or comic books that loved ones can read. Or rely on socks, boxers, towels or other practical items they can use. Or fill the nooks and crannies with individually wrapped hard candies, packets of gum, licorice, lollipops or energy bars.
- **Avoid Aromatherapy** Don't slip nonfood items laced with fragrance into a food package. No one wants to bite into a cookie that tastes like soap.
- **Icing to Go** Fancy frosted cookies don't travel well, but go ahead and tuck in a container of store-bought frosting and cookie decorations so your loved ones can ice the sweets themselves.

WHAT'S THE SECRET TO BETTER TASTING STUFFING? BETTER SAUSAGE.

Italian All Natural Ground Sausage Stuffing

- 1 pkg. Johnsonville® Mild Italian Sausage (Ground or de-cased links)
- 1/4 cup olive oil, separated
- 2 loaves focaccia bread (12 oz. each), cut into 1-in. cubes
- 1 tsp. coarse ground pepper
- 1 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded
- 1 small green pepper, diced
- 1/2 cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
- 5 large leaves fresh basil, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups water or white wine
- 1/4 cup butter, cubed

In a skillet, cook and crumble sausage in 1 tbsp. olive oil until no longer pink (160°F); set aside. In a large bowl, combine bread cubes and the remaining oil. Sprinkle with pepper; toss to coat. Transfer to a greased 15-in. x 10-in. baking pan. Bake at 350°F for 10 minutes or until crisp and lightly browned, stirring once. Remove pan to a wire rack to cool slightly. In a very large bowl, combine the bread cubes, reserved sausage, Parmesan cheese, green pepper, sun-dried tomatoes, basil and garlic. Combine eggs and water; pour over bread mixture and toss to coat. Transfer to a buttered 13-in. x 9-in. baking dish. Dot with butter. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F for 35-40 minutes or until hot.

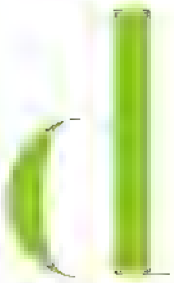
More great recipes and savings at JohnsonvilleKitchens.com

Chestnut Stuffing, page 84

Michael and Jane Stern, authors of more than 40 books, travel the country looking for good food. For more of their culinary discoveries, visit **roadfood.com**.

Stuffing of Legends

Our intrepid traveling food writers prove that whether it's **dressing**, **stuffing** or **filling**, Thanksgiving's most popular side offers infinite variations. | BY JANE AND MICHAEL STERN



Do you call it stuffing or dressing? Do you make it with cornbread, bread crumbs, wild rice or cereal; oysters or sausage; inside the bird or in a pan? It could be argued that there aren't two cooks in America who make precisely the same version of that essential side dish for Thanksgiving dinner, as well as for the next day's hot turkey sandwiches

Nearly everybody has a twist, a trick or a spice that makes their dressing unique. Sage seasoning is probably the closest thing to a constant, not only for its taste but for its distinctive holiday aroma. But even if every family's recipe is different, when you eat your way around the country it becomes deliciously clear that some preferences are distinctly regional

First, about the name: Up until Victorian times, everybody called it stuffing, a word that continues to prevail through much of the East and in some parts of the South. But manners mistresses of 100 years ago decreed that the word "stuffing" was rather crude and suggested that polite people could show their breeding by using the nicer-sounding word "dressing." For many people today, the difference is simply that stuffing is what you make inside the bird, while dressing is what you make in a pan. Pennsylvania Dutch cooks add mashed potatoes to their bread stuffing and call it "filling." And it is!

In Louisiana, east Texas and the northern Great Lakes region, the essential ingredient is rice or wild rice. We've sampled hazelnut-based stuffing in Oregon and pecan stuffing in New Mexico. In the South and in seriously Yankee kitchens of the Northeast, cornbread rules. New England cooks might use cornbread that is muffin-sweet. In Dixie, you'll likely find cornbread stuffing flecked with "cracklin's," crunchy bits of deep-fried pork skin

At the **Loveless Cafe** in Nashville, they make dressing with a combination of cornbread and biscuits. But to a majority of cooks, plain bread is the foundation. Ordinary white bread—as crumbs, cubes or shreds—is part of so many traditional family recipes.

For the absolute classic sage dressing, the place to go is **Huber's Cafe** in Portland, Oregon, which has specialized in turkey dinners for 122 years. In areas with a rich Italian or Portuguese heritage, expect sausage to add super savor to the dish; likewise, in the Southwest, Mexican chorizo can deliver a peppery punch. Every November, the **Tucson Tamale Co.** goes a little bit wild and makes tamales with turkey, stuffing and cranberry sauce: Thanksgiving in a corn shuck! In the Midwest and East, tradition-minded cooks add the silky luxe of chestnuts to the recipe. Stuffing made with oysters is big along Atlantic shores and the Gulf Coast, nowhere better than at **Lil' Dizzy's Cafe** in New Orleans.

If you're the chef in charge of making stuffing for the family's Thanksgiving dinner, we have one piece of sage advice to offer, pun intended. Experiment all you wish; try new and exotic recipes to wow the guests. But no matter how clever you get, you must—we repeat, must—also make the stuffing that everyone expects, no matter how ordinary it may seem. Whatever else the holiday may be, Thanksgiving is all about family traditions.

Road Trip Guide to Stuffing

Huber's Cafe 411 SW Third Ave., Portland, Oregon, 503-228-5686; **hubers.com**
Lil' Dizzy's Cafe 1500 Esplanade Ave., New Orleans, 504-569-8997
Loveless Cafe 8400 Highway 100, Nashville, Tennessee, 615-646-9700, **lovelesscafe.com**
Tucson Tamale Co. 2545 E. Broadway Blvd., Tucson, Arizona, 520-305-4760 **tucsontamalecompany.com**

PHOTO: TODD FRANCE (MICHAEL AND JANE STERN)

Sage Sausage Dressing

Port s a sweet red w ne that's often served as a dessert beverage, but t adds a deep flavor to our fam ly's hearty stuffing.
—**DENISE HRUZ** GERMANTOWN, W SCONSIN

PREP: 40 M N. • **BAKE:** 25 M N.
YIELD: 17 SERV NGS (¾ CUP EACH)

- ¼ cup port wine or 2 Tbsp. grape juice plus 2 Tbsp. chicken broth
- ½ cup dried cherries
- 1 large tart apple, peeled, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 lb. bulk sage pork sausage
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 celery ribs, sliced
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 cups chicken broth
- ½ cup orange juice
- ¼ cup butter, cubed
- 1 pkg. (14 oz.) seasoned stuffing cubes
- 1 cup chopped walnuts, toasted
- ¼ cup thinly sliced fresh sage

1. In a small saucepan, bring wine to a boil. Stir in cherries; remove from the heat. In a small bowl, combine apple and lemon juice; toss to coat. Set aside cherry and apple mixtures.
2. In a Dutch oven, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink. Remove from pan with a slotted spoon; drain. In the same pan, saute onion and celery in oil until tender. Add the broth, orange juice and butter; heat until butter is melted.
3. Stir in the stuffing cubes, walnuts, sage, cherry mixture, apple mixture and sausage. Transfer to a greased 13 in. x 9 in. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until lightly browned.

Sage Sausage Dressing

Zucchini Stuffing

BIG BATCH!

Chestnut Stuffing

t wou dn't be Thanksg v ng without a serving of my family's favor te stuffing. f you can't find ,arred chestnuts at your grocery store, check gourmet cooking shops or order them on ne.
—**LEE BREMSON** KANSAS CITY, MISSOUR

PREP: 40 M N. • **BAKE:** 35 M N.
YIELD: 21 SERV NGS

- 1 large onion, chopped
- ½ cup chopped fennel bulb
- 1½ cups butter, cubed, divided
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups peeled cooked chestnuts, coarsely chopped
- 1 large pear, chopped
- 1 cup chicken broth
- ½ cup mixed dried fruit, coarsely chopped
- 2 tsp. poultry seasoning
- 2 tsp. minced fresh rosemary
- 2 tsp. minced fresh thyme
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 2 loaves day-old white bread (1 lb. each), cubed
- 3 eggs
- ¼ cup 2% milk

1. In a large skillet, saute onion and fennel in ½ cup butter until tender. Stir in garlic; cook 2 minutes longer. Stir in the chestnuts, pear, broth, dried fruit, seasonings and remaining butter; cook until butter is melted. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 3-4 minutes or until dried fruit is softened.
2. Place in a large bowl. Stir in bread cubes. Whisk eggs and milk; drizzle over stuffing and toss to coat.
3. Transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. and a greased 8-in. square baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 25 minutes. Uncover; bake 10-15 minutes longer or until lightly browned.

Zucchini Stuffing

I've been serving this dish for years and always rece ve comp ments on it. f you don't have day-old bread n your pantry, simply slice fresh bread and bake it at 300° for 10 m nutes.
—**MARY ANN DELL** PHOENIXVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

PREP: 25 M N. • **BAKE:** 40 M N.
YIELD: 12 SERV NGS (¾ CUP EACH)

- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 celery rib, chopped
- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. poultry seasoning
- ½ cup canned pumpkin
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup 2% milk
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 4 cups day-old cubed bread
- 3 medium zucchini, chopped
- ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese

1. In a small skillet, saute onion and celery in butter until tender; set aside.
2. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and poultry seasoning. In a small bowl, whisk pumpkin, eggs, milk and butter; stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in the bread cubes, zucchini, cheese and onion mixture.
3. Transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. baking dish. Cover; bake at 325° for 30 minutes. Uncover; bake 10-15 minutes longer or until lightly browned. ■

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Road Tested & Approved

This winning recipe captures the **spirit of a community** while dishing up **down-home flavor.**

This recipe is inspired by Midwestern miners' lunches in the early 1900s. The pasty pie was an easy-to-eat, hearty meal for men who spent the day laboring.

No one knows better than die hard Roadfoodies that every town in America has something unique to offer: people, scenery and food. With hotels across the country, the Baymont Inn chain wanted to celebrate the distinctive dishes of cities from coast to coast with its Hometown Hospitality recipe contest, where our readers were invited to share recipes that capture the essence of their regions. Jenny Hatlen, *below*, took home top prize with her Hometown Pasty Pies (pronounced *pass-tee*, thank you very much). The dish features classic Midwestern ingredients.

Hometown Heritage Jenny Hatlen's Hometown Pasty Pies celebrate the history of the founders and miners of Edgerton, Wisconsin. Jenny's prize is a fitting one: a road trip to three different Roadfood destinations.

Hometown Pasty Pies

I make these in advance and freeze them for a quick dinner later, or to share with those who need a warm, filling meal.
—**JENNY HATLEN** EDGERTON, WISCONSIN

PREP: 70 MIN. + CHILLING
BAKE: 45 MIN. + STANDING
YIELD: 2 PIES (8 SERVINGS EACH)

- **5 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 Tbsp. sugar**
- **1½ tsp. salt**
- **2 cups butter-flavored shortening**
- **7 Tbsp. cold water**
- **1 egg**
- **1 Tbsp. white vinegar**

FILLING

- **2 cups cubed peeled potatoes**
- **2 cups finely chopped fresh carrots**
- **1 lb. ground beef**
- **1 lb. bulk pork sausage**
- **1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **1 can (10¾ oz.) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted**
- **1 can (10¾ oz.) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted**
- **1 cup frozen peas**
- **1 Tbsp. sherry or chicken broth**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **½ tsp. seasoned salt**
- **¼ tsp. pepper**
- **½ cup shredded Colby cheese**
- **½ cup sour cream**

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt; cut in shortening until crumbly. Whisk water, egg and vinegar; gradually add to flour mixture, tossing with a fork until dough forms a ball. Divide dough in quarters so that two of the portions are slightly larger than the other two; wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
2. Meanwhile, place potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 5 minutes. Add carrots; cook 6-9 minutes longer or until vegetables are tender. Drain and set aside.
3. In a Dutch oven, cook beef and sausage over medium heat until meat is no longer pink. Remove from pan with a slotted spoon; drain, reserving 1 Tbsp. drippings. Saute mushrooms and onion in drippings until tender. Add the soups, peas, sherry, salt, seasoned salt, pepper, beef mixture and potato mixture; heat through.
4. Roll out one of the larger portions of dough to fit a 9-in. pie plate. Transfer pastry to pie plate. Trim pastry even with edge. Fill with half of the meat mixture. Repeat with remaining larger portion of dough and filling.
5. Roll out smaller portions of dough to fit tops of pies. Place over filling; cut slits and trim, seal and flute edges.
6. Bake at 375° for 45-50 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Cover edges with foil during the last 15 minutes to prevent overbrowning if necessary. Sprinkle tops with cheese, let stand for 10 minutes. Serve with the sour cream ■

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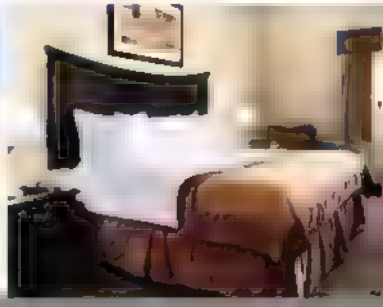

WYNDHAM REWARDS

all details and requirements.

Elegant Comfort

A Florida Field Editor draws inspiration from **England and Australia** in her American kitchen. BY KERRY DINGWALL

My interest in cooking dates back to when I was 6. I'd stand in my grandma's small kitchen in London and watch her make fruitcakes. My favorite part was licking the bowl. My mum noticed my enthusiasm, so she'd let me help in the kitchen as much as possible. I soon started cooking dinner for our family on Saturday nights. I remember slicing hot dogs in half, then lining them up against the side of a casserole dish and filling the center with macaroni and cheese. I topped the whole thing with fried onions and peppers and baked it in the oven. We called it "picket fence" because the hot dogs made a fence around the macaroni. To this day, my 77-year-old father still asks me to make picket fence when he visits.

My father was born in Australia, so my lineage is half-Australian and half-English, and both cultures influence my cooking (The Aussies are big meat eaters.) I love to make Yorkshire puddings, toad in the hole, and bubble and squeak, but I especially love making beef Wellington. I prepare different versions depending on the occasion. You can use hamburger for very casual dinners, or make a holiday version with beef tenderloin. (If I'm serving a cute guy, he'll definitely get the filet!) I love the dish's versatility, and the best part is that it's very uncomplicated to make. And the presentation is awesome!

The English and Australians also tend to eat a lot of parsnips, the way we eat carrots in the United States. When you bake them into a creamy gratin, the flavors blend so well.

I live near the top of Florida, just outside Jacksonville, where it's cool in the fall. So I like to make homemade soups, which make the house smell wonderful.

As a mortgage underwriter, I approve and reject home loans. It's a tough business. Cooking is my therapy, especially on the weekends.

—As told to Cheryl Sternman Rule

Kerry Dingwall lives in Ponte Vedra, Florida, with her golden retriever puppy, Lacy. She loves experimenting with recipes, no matter their regionality.

Pumpkin Bisque with Smoked Gouda

Pumpkin Bisque with Smoked Gouda

Love the smell of this rich, cheesy soup as it bubbles on the stove. The Gouda cheese adds a delightful smokiness that just says autumn to me.

PREP: 15 MIN. • **COOK:** 35 MIN.
YIELD: 9 SERVINGS (2¼ QT.)

- **4 bacon strips, chopped**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **3 garlic cloves, minced**
- **6 cups chicken broth**
- **1 can (29 oz.) solid-pack pumpkin**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **¼ tsp. ground nutmeg**
- **⅛ tsp. pepper**
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1 cup shredded Gouda cheese**
- **2 Tbsp. minced fresh parsley**
- **Additional shredded Gouda cheese, optional**

1. In a Dutch oven, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove to paper towels with a slotted spoon; drain, reserving 1 Tbsp. drippings. Saute onion in drippings until tender. Add garlic; cook 1 minute longer.
2. Stir in the broth, pumpkin, salt, nutmeg and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Cool slightly.
3. In a blender, process soup in batches until smooth. Return all to pan. Stir in cream; heat through. Add cheese; stir until melted. Sprinkle each serving with parsley, bacon and additional cheese if desired.

Classic Beef Wellingtons

Perfect for holidays, this entree is also impressively easy. Find ready-made puff pastry sheets in the frozen food section.

PREP: 20 MIN. + CHILLING • **BAKE:** 25 MIN.
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- **4 beef tenderloin steaks (6 oz. each)**
- **¾ tsp. salt, divided**
- **½ tsp. pepper, divided**
- **2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided**
- **1¾ cups sliced fresh mushrooms**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **1 pkg. (17.3 oz.) frozen puff pastry, thawed**
- **1 egg, beaten**

1. Sprinkle steaks with lightly with ½ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper. In a large skillet, brown the steaks in 1 Tbsp. oil for 2-3 minutes on each side. Remove from skillet and refrigerate until chilled.
2. In the same skillet, saute the mushrooms and onion in remaining oil until tender. Stir in remaining salt and pepper; cool to room temperature.
3. On a lightly floured surface, roll each puff pastry sheet into a 14-in. x 9½-in. rectangle. Cut each into two 7-in. squares (use scraps to make decorative cutouts if desired). Place a steak in the center of each square; top with mushroom mixture. Lightly brush pastry edges with water. Bring opposite corners of pastry over steak; pinch seams to seal tightly.
4. Place on a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Cut four small slits in top of pastry. Arrange cutouts over top if desired. Brush with egg.
5. Bake at 425° for 25-30 minutes or until pastry is golden brown and meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, a meat thermometer should read 145°; medium, 160°; well-done, 170°).

Parsnip Potato Gratin

Parsnips don't get much space in the produce section. But their subtle sweetness makes them worth the hunt.

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 50 MIN.
YIELD: 10 SERVINGS

- **4 large potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced**
- **4 medium onions, thinly sliced**
- **3 large parsnips, peeled and thinly sliced**
- **1½ cups (6 oz.) shredded Gruyere or Swiss cheese, divided**
- **1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour**
- **¾ tsp. salt**
- **¼ tsp. pepper**
- **2 cups heavy whipping cream**

1. Layer the potatoes, onions, parsnips and ¾ cup cheese in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. baking dish; set aside. In a small saucepan, combine the flour, salt and pepper; gradually whisk in cream. Bring to a gentle boil, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat; pour over vegetables. Sprinkle with remaining cheese.
2. Cover; bake at 375° for 30 minutes. Uncover; bake 20-25 minutes longer or until the vegetables are tender and top is golden brown. ■

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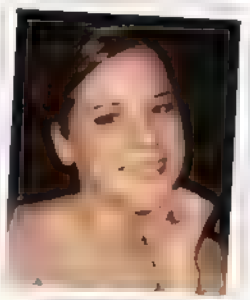

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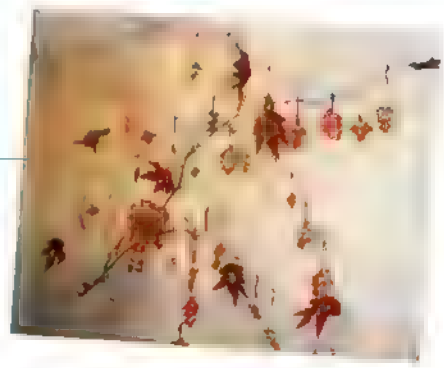
MAKE IT MEMORABLE

Field Editors **Teena Petrus** and **Arisa Cupp** show how they dress up Thanksgiving.

Teena Petrus
JOHNSTON, PENNSYLVANIA
In addition to operating a home-based business, Teena is a passionate seamstress.

Each holiday, I hang decorated cutout cookies on a crabapple branch in the dining room. It's an edible wall hanging. Festive ribbon adds a little flair. For Thanksgiving, I use autumn leaf cookies. On Thanksgiving Day, my son Donovan and daughter Veronica help out in the kitchen, and every TV in the house is tuned to the Macy's parade.



Arisa Cupp
SHERWOOD, OREGON
Three young children and a husband keep Arisa happily busy. Cooking, she says, is how she shows love.

At Thanksgiving, I like to add some holiday style to my home. I made these wreaths to hang on our chairs for a feeling of fall. I purchased the small grapevine wreaths at my local craft store, then used hot glue to attach the artificial leaves. I attached them to each chair with cute orange ribbon.

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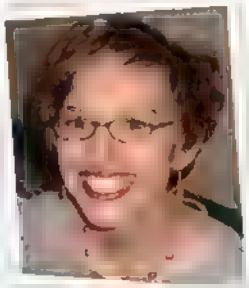

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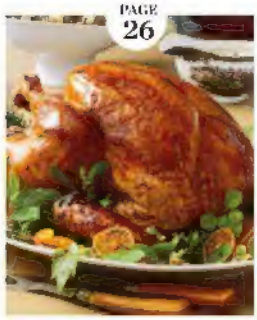
closeencounter

Being in the public eye leads one Field Editor to wing it for a wedding.

After I gave a *TOH* presentation in Loup City, Nebraska, I got a panicked call from a woman who had been in the audience. She needed a recipe for chicken wings for her daughter's upcoming wedding reception. I was about to leave for vacation, but sent her some recipes. Her pick: Crispy Onion Wings (**tasteofhome.com/onionwings**). The wedding guests loved them!

—**TAMI KUEHL** LOUP CITY, NEBRASKA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Nutrition facts for all recipes available at **tasteofhome.com/plus**.
Noted costs are price per serving. If no cost is listed, price will vary.
*Recipe includes nutritional facts.

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Martha Stewart

In 1982, the best-selling *Entertaining* started Martha on an epic **journey of gracious living.** Her just-released book, *Martha's Entertaining: A Year of Celebrations*—equal parts sequel and diary—**continues the voyage.**

INTERVIEW BY **CHRISTIAN MILLMAN** | ILLUSTRATION BY **MICHAEL WITTE**

1 **Has it really been 30 years since *Entertaining* came out and changed everything?** I know. Time flies, doesn't it?

2 **In *Martha's Entertaining*, you chronicle a year of celebrations. Did you ever shout, "Hey, all you people, get out of my house!"?** Not once. It makes me happy. There was a stretch with five amazing parties in one week. That's fun for me.

Martha's Entertaining: A Year of Celebrations *hits bookstores Nov. 1.*

3 **You enjoy entertaining in the morning most. Why?** I live on a farm. The nicest part of the day is the morning. Everyone is fresh and happy. The day is just beginning.

4 **With all those parties, do you ever try new-to-you recipes on guests?** Sure. I'm a pretty good cook so I know by looking at the recipe if it's going to work. You can also say, "I want to try out a new recipe tonight. Do you want to try it with me?"

5 **A former neighbor says he always wanted to knock on your door and borrow a cup of sugar but never did.** He should have! That's what neighbors are for. I love borrowing things—but I always return them.

six **How do you add special touches to daily-driver dinners?** Take spaghetti: Grate some fresh Parmesan cheese, add some chopped fresh herbs. A minute later, it's something special. I also keep 14 different kinds of salt in ramekins. They go with any dish, even dessert, and make even the most ordinary meal taste so much better.

7 **You're known for so many signature dishes. Is there a limit to the number of dishes anyone can truly master?** I don't think so. Those are what I call the 101s. You can master a lot of 101s in life.

8 **So no advantage to concentrating on just a few?** You know who does that? A lot of men. I have a friend who has mastered the puttanesca. You know when you go to his house what you're going to have and it's going to be really good puttanesca.

9 **It's almost Thanksgiving. Traditional approach? Change it up a bit?** I love subtly altering the traditional to make it more interesting. But some things should stay the same. My favorite thing on the Thanksgiving weekend is actually a delicious turkey club sandwich made from leftovers.

10 ***Mmmm*, leftovers. Would it surprise people to find out you eat straight from the container?** No, everybody does that. Don't you eat peanut butter out of the jar? A little spoon, right? Cold stuffing—I love it. Olives. Liverwurst. Hot fudge. I rarely open a can of sweetened condensed milk because I know I'll finish the whole thing. It's delicious. ■

MORE ONLINE
For Martha's French toast recipe, visit **tasteofhome.com/acrossthetable.**

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